Famous Artists Course

Famous Artists Schools, Inc., Westport, Connecticut

Television art

Lesson 24

Albert Dorne

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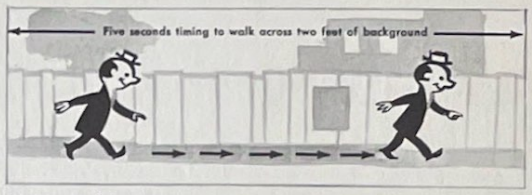
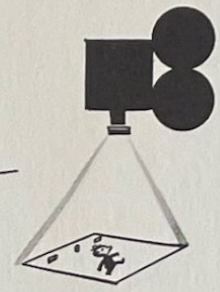
Animation



Timing and layout

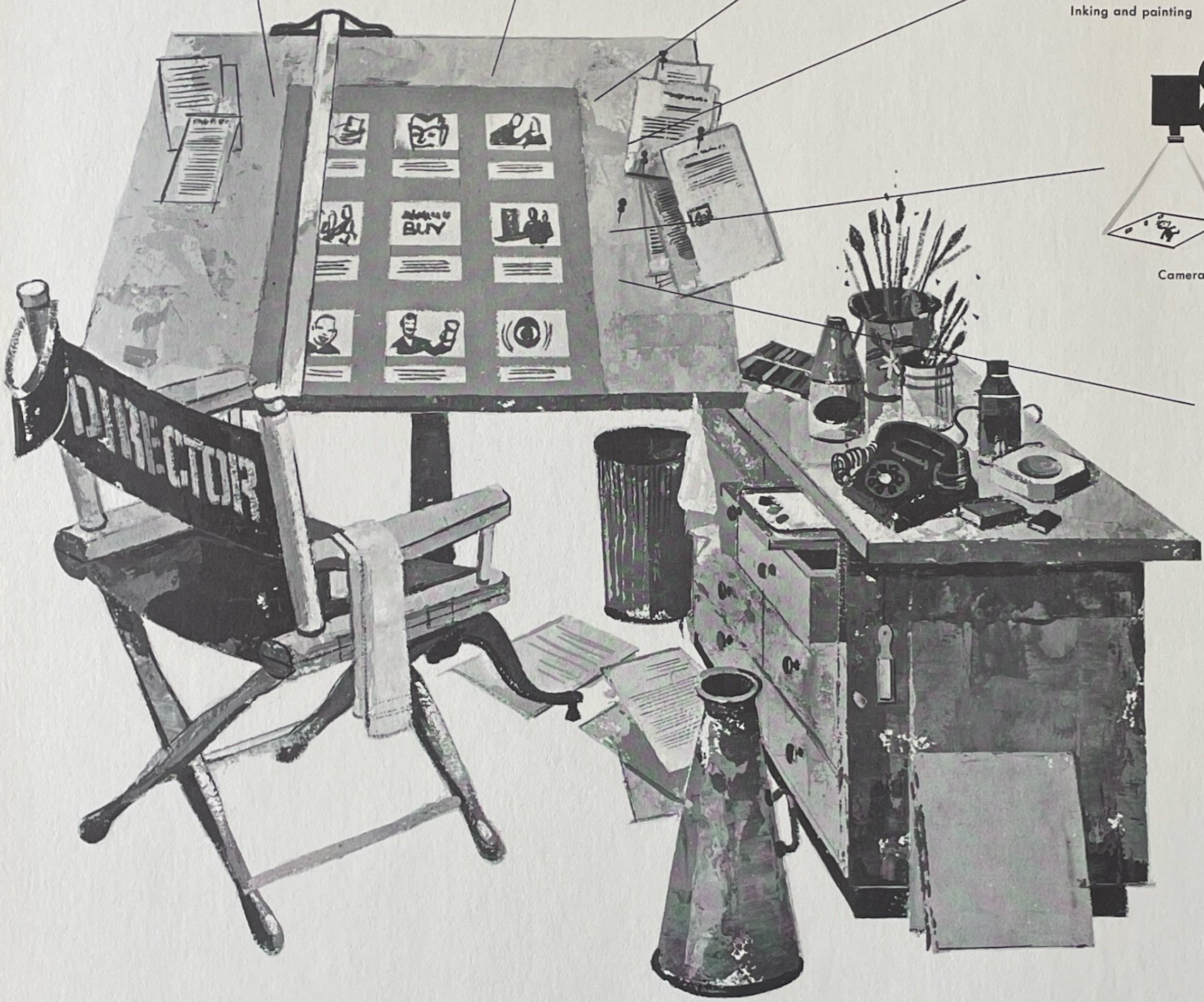
Background

Inking and painting



Camera

Laboratory



The artist's place in television today is in the Director's Chair. The success of everything that will finally appear on the screen depends on what he creates on his drawing board. All the complicated mechanics of TV production depend on the original creation of the artist. The timing and layout specialists, who control the timing of the action — the animators, who handle the movement — the specialists who do the backgrounds over which the animators work — the inking and painting crew, who do the final rendering — the camera and laboratory departments, who photograph and make the prints — all work from the artist's original concept, from which he produces the working storyboard.

This is a single frame from the first animated cartoon made for television. It was created by Chad Grothkopf in 1938, when there were approximately fifty television sets in the United States.

The artist in television – Chad (Chad Grothkopf)

The artist has come into his own in the exciting world of television. In this highly creative visual field there are wonderful opportunities for you, the artist, to use your talent in original, imaginative ways and make a good living while you do so.

Television is such an enormous medium that it is difficult to comprehend its almost unlimited possibilities. But to get an idea of its incredible growth we have only to realize that the very first animated cartoon made specifically for television was created in 1938 and seen on only about fifty TV sets. Today there are not fifty, but there is a television set in virtually every home in America – and an enormous number of homes have two or even more sets. This doesn't include TV sets in public places – hotels, motels, and restaurants. And the portable set has become a member of the family when it travels.

Television influences our habits, our manners, our likes and dislikes, our educational system, our opinions, our politics, our deepest hopes and dreams – our very lives. It will continue to do so – double strength – as it continues to grow.

What has happened in America in the distribution of TV sets is happening all over the world. The effect of television, both present and future, is incalculable. Pictures have been a universal language since the times of the cave men. We understand and believe what we see, no matter who we are or where we live. The visual image can be more effective in establishing communication between peoples of different nationalities and different countries than any soapbox speeches ever written or shouted. There is no doubt that television is a major influence in the world today.

And where does the artist fit into this picture? Right in the middle – in the heart of it.

Television is growing so fast that it is like a creative monster that gobbles up talent and incessantly demands more. And one of the most exciting things about the demand in this country is that the opportunities are definitely not limited to big cities or the top stations. You don't have to feel that you must work for Walt Disney or the big networks. There is a great need for new talent in small cities and towns everywhere, on your local stations.

The artist who creates for the TV screen is very much like an architect. The architect consults with his client, learns his requirements, and then makes a blueprint. The blueprint is a detailed plan from which the carpenters, electricians, and plumbers will build the house. Everything that happens from then on depends on that blueprint. The best carpenters in the world cannot build a sound, satisfying house if they are working from bad, thoughtless plans.

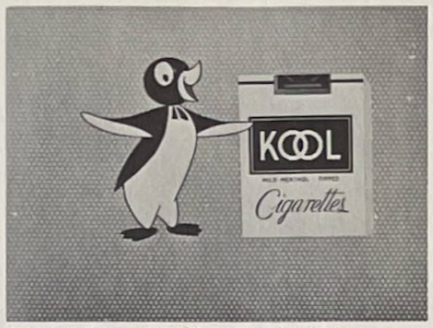
The TV artist makes a kind of blueprint, too – only in his case it is called a "storyboard." In this lesson we will show you how to create a good storyboard. Once you are able to do this, the "carpenters" in Animation, Timing and Layout, Camera and Laboratory, Inking and Painting can all take over with a reasonable assurance of a successful individual contribution to the over-all plan.

The fundamental principles that make a good storyboard apply with equal force whether your work will be shown by large or small television stations. We feel that you, the student, can learn the basic architecture – the principles and techniques of television art – in this lesson. Then you can aim your talent and know-how at the big studios, the small studios, the advertising agencies big and small, your local businessmen, or your local stations – with equal confidence.

We will give you the fundamentals and techniques of drawing for television. Of course, there are many mechanical and production aspects of television that can only be learned on the actual job – in a studio or in a television environment. TV is such a new medium that all the people involved in it – including the pros – are learning new technical and creative things virtually every day. As time goes on, constant experiments will develop still more new ideas and directions.

One of the best teachers you will have is your own television set. So it is important for you to watch television – learn what is going on. Every time you turn on your set you may see something exciting. Learn to incorporate what we are teaching you – the basic principles – with the creative new things you see on television, the new techniques and imaginative approaches. Always be inquisitive, be willing to learn.

In this ever-growing field of television, the visual image is supreme, and the artist is the king. So far, there are no famous artists in this young medium. Maybe you will be one of them.

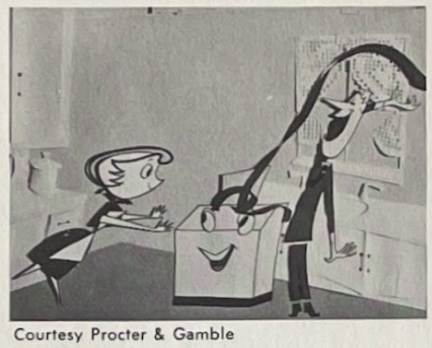


Courtesy Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp.

Courtesy Warner-Lambert Pharmaceutical Company

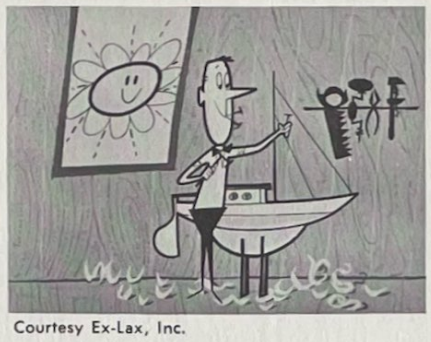
By permission of the Jell-O Division; General Foods Corp.

Courtesy Columbia Records

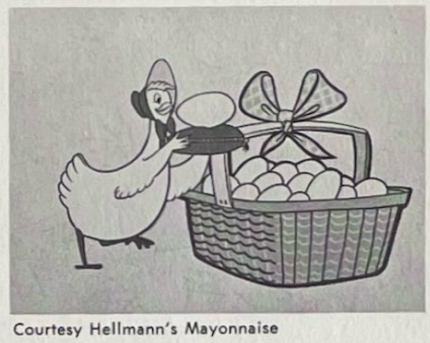


Courtesy Procter & Gamble

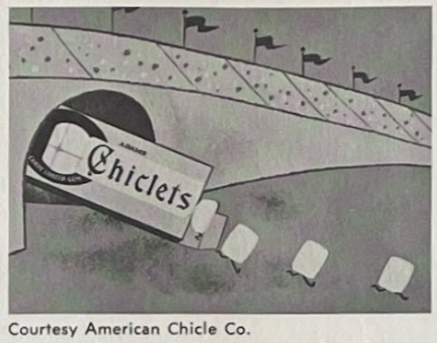
Courtesy Atlantic Refining Co.



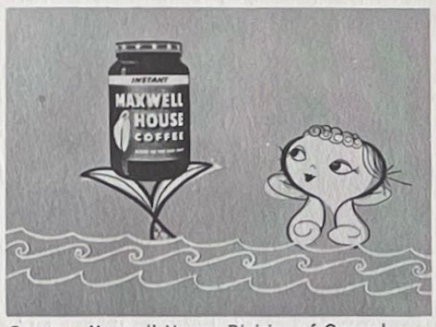
Courtesy Ex-Lax, Inc.



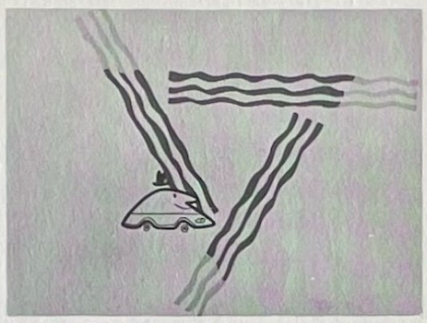
Courtesy Hellmann's Mayonnaise



Courtesy American Chicle Co.



Courtesy Maxwell House; Division of General Foods Corp.



Courtesy Continental Oil Co.

Courtesy Nucoa Margarine

Courtesy The Continental Baking Co.

Courtesy Waterman-Bic Pen Corp.

Courtesy P. Ballantine & Sons, Newark, N. J.

Courtesy The Mennen Co.

Courtesy Esso Standard; Div. of Humble Oil & Refining Co.

Courtesy S. C. Johnson & Son, Inc.

The experience of Chad Grothkopf, who joined the Famous Artists Schools to produce this exciting lesson, goes back to the very beginning of television. Because of his rich experience in the field of Animation and Television Art, he is eminently qualified to teach you the principles of this great medium. On this page are just a few film clips from commercials for which Mr. Grothkopf has created and produced TV art during the past few years.

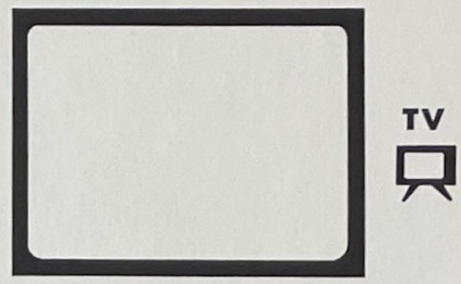
KEEP IT SIMPLE!

In television, not only is simplicity the keynote of the medium – it is its most essential element. As you follow the various steps in this lesson, you will discover the many reasons why simplicity is so important. For a start, we suggest that you make a sign – KEEP IT SIMPLE – and hang it in a prominent place in your working area.

Now let's see one very basic reason why simplicity is so important in TV art. Look at the motion picture screen and the television screen at the right and compare the two. The great difference between them is in the matter of size. Actually, we haven't reduced the TV screen to its proper proportion – if we had, you would hardly be able to see it.

Because the TV screen is so small, the pictures you draw for it must be quite simple. There should be a minimum of detail – no more than you need to express the picture idea clearly. Otherwise, when your pictures are shown on the television screen, the forms may be hard to recognize and the action may not be clear.

Look at your sign – KEEP IT SIMPLE – <u>often</u>.



For movies

For television

At the top we show you a scene from an animated cartoon as it would appear on a movie screen. Below this you see the same scene on a TV screen. Note how the details which show up so well on the large screen become confused and hard to make out. Actually, a TV screen would be proportionately much smaller than the one you see here.

The large picture above shows how the scene at the left should be drawn for television. The tones are fewer and many minor details have been omitted. The scene has been simplified throughout. When it is shown on the television screen, everything in the picture is clear and understandable.

What is a storyboard?

You might describe a storyboard as a comic strip without dialogue "balloons." But it is a great deal more than that. It is the basis of all TV production — the blueprint from which everyone involved in that production will work. It is also the first visual concept that your client will see. It is similar to the rough or comprehensive for an ad that you show your client or advertising agency for approval before you produce the finished art.

There are different types of storyboards to fit different situations — animated storyboards, live storyboards, and abstract storyboards. Let's consider these various types one by one.

The animated storyboard is similar to a comic strip. It generally has entertainment value and broad human appeal. It tells the story in a humorous way. Properly done, it starts by entertaining and winds up doing a selling job for the advertiser. It is very much like a side show — it beats the drums to get the audience to view the product. When done creatively and in good taste, the animated storyboard is one of the most effective means of advertising communication used today.

The live storyboard shows real people and objects and is designed to do a realistic job of communication. From this storyboard, actors will be cast who will have to get the message across to the TV audience. As opposed to the entertainment quality of the animated board, the live board has great believability because the audience can identify themselves more easily with live people. When the artist can take live people and put them into an advertising storyboard in a believable situation that communicates the advertiser's message convincingly and forcefully, he has accomplished what is known in advertising as the "hard sell." If a TV artist can design a storyboard with entertainment value that lasts long enough to deliver the "hard sell" message, he usually has a successful commercial.

There is also the combination live and animated storyboard. In this type the animation is generally used to introduce the commercial in an entertaining way, in an effort to hold the interest of the audience until a human being is introduced who will deliver the advertising message. This results in an entertaining storyboard plus "hard sell."

Next we have the abstract storyboard. Don't be frightened by the word "abstract." Abstract storyboards are not wildly modernistic or obscure. Instead of using cartoons or realistic illustrations we use simple shapes and symbols, often similar in form and size to the figures or objects they represent. A good abstract storyboard utilizes shapes with such simple strength that it is often easier to understand than the more detailed presentation of cartoons or realistic illustrations.

One very important thing that is vital in designing any storyboard is to create an interesting pictorial story line. The time-honored formula for stories of young love, either in magazines or the movies, goes like this: boy meets girl, a problem arises, boy loses girl, a solution to the problem is found, boy gets girl — and everybody is happy. Very much the same formula usually fits a TV story or commercial. A problem is stated, a method of solving the problem is found, and there is our happy ending — business for the advertiser. If this formula sounds routine, remember that it is the creative manner in which the story is told and visually presented that makes the big difference. If it is original and entertaining, the viewer will believe in the happy ending, and consequently believe in the product advertised.

But even though the story line is important, never forget that this is a visual medium. The pictures should tell the story. The sound track is secondary.

The best way to tell how well a commercial has been designed pictorially is to turn off the sound of your TV set and see if you get the message from the picture alone. If the over-all message is communicated to you without the help of the words and music, then you are watching a good commercial — one whose storyboard was conceived on the logical basic principles of television storyboard art. Naturally the sound will make it even better. When picture and sound work perfectly together, television becomes the most marvelous means of communication yet created!

1

ANNOUNCER: THAT MAN'S DREAMING AGAIN... WHAT'S UP TONIGHT, HUGH?

Open on announcer at desk. He indicates Christmas display, then turns to look offstage.

2

HUGH: HE'S DREAMING OF THE MCGREGOR WEEKENDER SHIRT... WE BOTH HAVE OURS ALREADY... AND BELIEVE ME, THEY'RE GREAT!

Cut to medium close-up of two actors, Hugh and Joe. Both wear McGregor Weekenders.

3

YOU CAN WEAR THE WEEKENDER ANYWHERE... ANY DAY OF THE WEEK... WITH TIE OR WITHOUT...

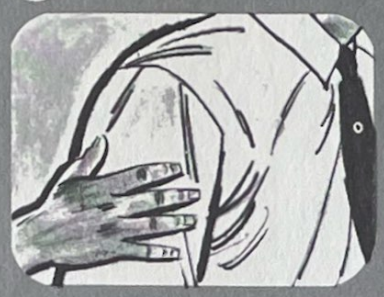
Hugh points to Joe's tie.

4

...WITH SLEEVES UP OR DOWN.

Hugh points to his and Joe's sleeves.

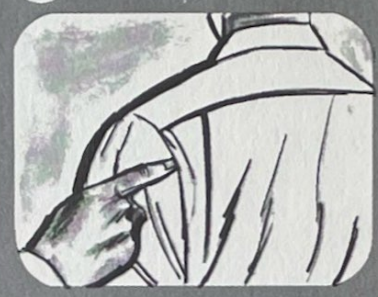
5



IT'S BUILT FOR COMFORT. MADE OF SOFT, WASHABLE RAYON AND GABARDINE IN THE NEWEST IRIDESCENT COLORS.

Hugh smooths the material on Joe's shirt... then turns him around...

6



AND THIS BACK PLEAT GIVES YOU PLENTY OF ROOM TO MOVE AROUND IN. SOMETHING ELSE... NO MATTER WHAT THE ACTION...

...to show back pleat.

7

...WHETHER YOU'RE BOWLING...

Joe makes bowling motion on cue "you're bowling."

8

...OR DOING A CHA-CHA... THE TAIL ALWAYS STAYS PUT.

He makes cha-cha motion on cue "doing a cha-cha."

9

LOOK! IT'S EXTRA LONG! (TO AUDIENCE) WHY NOT MAKE YOUR...

Hugh yanks on Joe's tail and pulls it out to show length.

10

HEY! WATCH THAT!

Joe reaches for Hugh's shirttail and they grapple playfully.

11

ANNOUNCER: OK, YOU TWO! (TO AUDIENCE) WHY NOT MAKE YOUR GUY'S DREAM COME TRUE?...

Cut to announcer at desk. He laughs.

12

...GET THE MCGREGOR WEEKENDER SHIRT... ONLY $5 AT YOUR FAVORITE STORE!

Cut to card reading "McGregor Weekender Shirt... $5."

Courtesy The McGregor Co.

A live storyboard for a shirt company

This is an example of a live storyboard prepared for McGregor Shirts. The art work was done in an illustrative, traditional manner, and then the situations shown were portrayed with live actors. Under each frame you see the words spoken and a description of the action. Notice how close-ups and long shots are used to demonstrate the shirt, and audience appeal is strengthened by touches of humor.

8 The animated commercial

This is an example of a successful animated commercial for Grape-Nuts. It is digested from the actual film as it was used on television. Many intermediate pictures have been omitted but there are enough here to give you an excellent idea of the sequence and flow of the story and the commercial itself. Keep in mind that the actual one-minute film consisted of 1,440 frames like those you see below.

Under each picture we give you the words of the sound track and below these a description of the action. Some of the terms used are technical. You can find out what they mean by consulting pages 13-15.

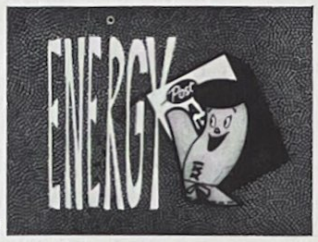
Courtesy General Foods Corp.

1

(SOUND EFFECT) BOINGGG!

Open on Grape-Nuts box. Boxing glove (symbol of energy) spins to foreground from behind box.

2



(JINGLE) EVERY LITTLE GRAPE-NUT...

Pop on word "Energy."

3

...HAS A FLAVOR...

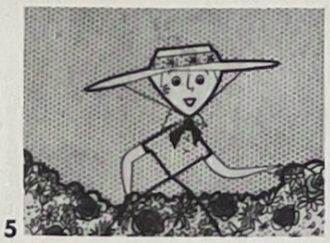
Word splits into three separate words.

4

...OF ITS OWN!

Package moves left, eliminating words.

5



(WOMAN'S VOICE) ISN'T THIS A LOVELY GARDEN? BUT IT WASN'T ALWAYS LIKE THIS.

Cut to woman in flower garden. She reminisces.

6

I TRIED TO GET MY FAMILY TO HELP ME TO DIG AND PLANT AND SEED.

Remembers scene with family around table covered with gardening equipment.

7

...BUT THEY HAD NO INTEREST, NO ENERGY.

Family leaves -- too tired and listless to help with gardening.

8

THEN I HAD AN IDEA!

Disappointed mother gets idea...

9

A WONDERFUL IDEA OF SERVING AN ENERGY-GIVING BREAKFAST.

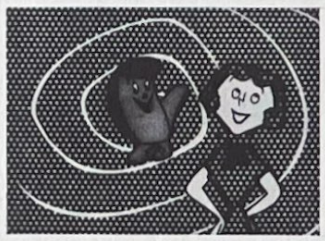
...to solve problem of providing family with energy.

10

A BREAKFAST OF GRAPE-NUTS!

Her solution -- Grape-Nuts.

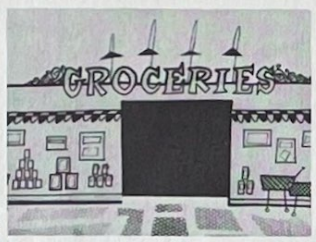
11



...THE ENERGY-GIVING CEREAL.

Package is replaced by boxing glove.

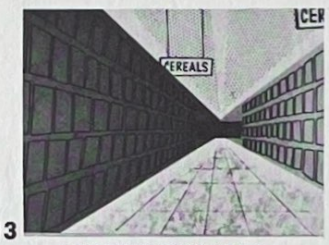
12



SO I RUSHED TO THE GROCERY...

Cut to exterior of grocery store.

13



...AND DOWN THE AISLE...

Truck into store and down aisle.

14

...TILL I FOUND WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR...

Stop at shelf containing Grape-Nuts.

15

...POST'S GRAPE-NUTS!...

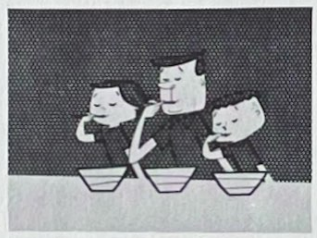
Hold on three packages -- fade out store background.

16

...THAT ENERGY-GIVING CEREAL FOR MY FAMILY.

Fade in family at table.

17



AFTER A BOWL OF THESE DELICIOUS GOODIES...

Family eats heartily.

18

...THEY RUSHED OUT TO HELP IN THE GARDEN.

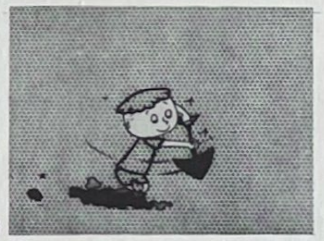
Pan right as they run in front of mother holding package.

19

(JINGLE) EVERY LITTLE GRAPE-NUT HAS A FLAVOR OF ITS OWN.

Hold on mother and pop on boxing glove.

20



(ANNOUNCER'S VOICE OVER) WATCH BROTHER DIG!

Cut to little boy digging.

21

WATCH SISTER PLANT THAT SEED!

He digs himself out of view. Sister drops seed into hole.

22

(SOUND EFFECT) PING!

Little brother pops out of hole riding on immense flower.

23

AND LOOK AT DAD WEED!

Pan left to pick up husband weeding garden.

24

(WOMAN'S VOICE) AS I SAID, ISN'T THIS A LOVELY GARDEN?

Mother's reminiscence ends as we cut back to her in garden...

25

...THANKS TO ENERGY-GIVING GRAPE-NUTS!

...holding up Grape-Nuts package.

26

(SOUND EFFECT) BOINGGG!

Fade out mother in garden -- hold on package. It tilts.

27

(JINGLE) EVERY LITTLE GRAPE-NUT...

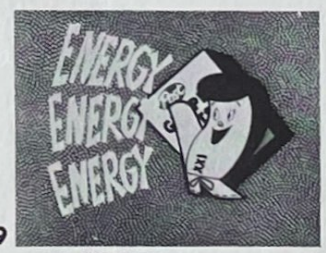
Boxing glove spins to foreground, revealing word "Energy."

28

...HAS A FLAVOR...

Word grows larger.

29



...OF ITS OWN!

It splits into three separate words.

30

(SOUND EFFECT) BOINGGG!

Package moves left, wiping out words.

The abstract commercial

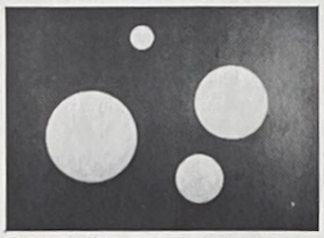
We now show you film clips from a 20-second abstract commercial – just as we did for the animated commercial on the preceding page. Although this is a digest – only 30 of the 480 frames of the complete commercial are shown – you can still see how smoothly one shape flows or develops into another and the interest of the story is maintained.

The narration for this film was a "singing commercial" with music. The words, and even the syllables of the words, were synchronized with the action on the screen. Here are the "lyrics":

Perkle-de-perc-perc,
It's the percolatin' flavor,
Nestl'-lé Nestlé's,
It's the coffee makes you say
Deedle-dee-licious,
Any strength you make it.
Perkle-de-perc-perc,
Nestl'-lé Nestlé's,
Serve it today.

The commercial ended on a realistic note. As the actual jar and the cup and saucer appeared in the closing shot, the announcer recommended: "Enjoy Nestlé's Instant Coffee."

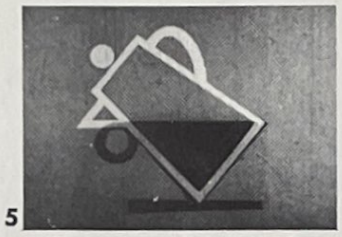
Courtesy The Nestle Co., Inc.

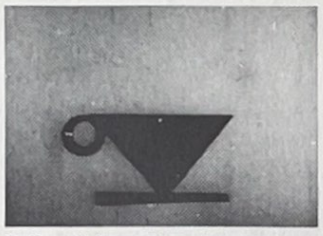

1 Pop on solid circles in sinc.

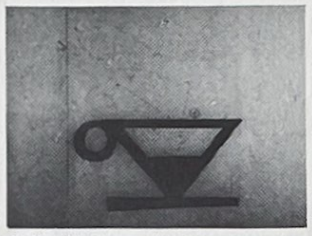
2 Circles disappear. Hold top circle and pop on coffeepot.

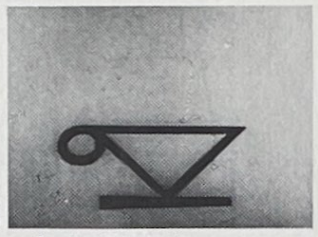
3 Coffee appears.

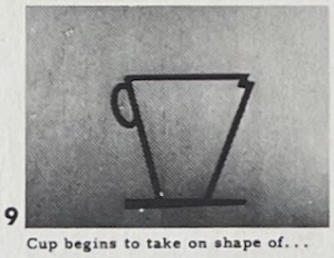
4 Tilt coffeepot.

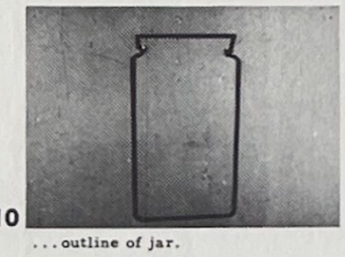

5 Coffee starts to form shape of cup and saucer.


6 Coffeepot disappears, leaving cup and saucer.

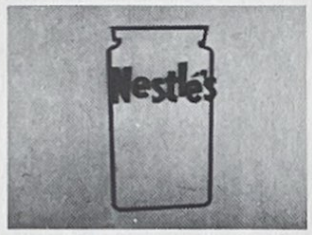

7 Coffee begins to disappear...


8 ...leaving cup empty.


9 Cup begins to take on shape of...


10 ...outline of jar.

11 Sponsor's name appears on screen.



12 Sponsor's name moves back and fits on jar.

13 Pop on bands.

14 Pop on "Instant."

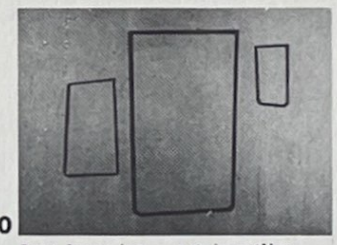
15 Pop on "Coffee."

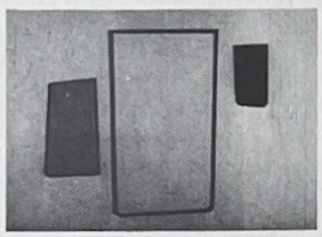
16 Pop on extra jar.

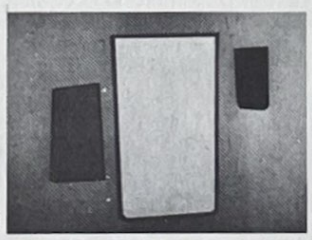
17 Pop on another jar.

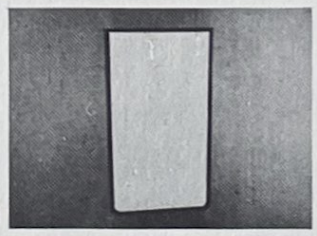
18 Lose small jar -- retain outline.

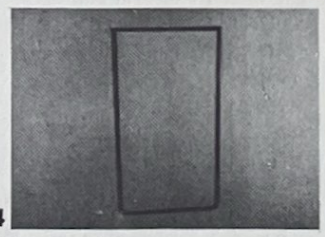
19 Lose other small jar -- retain outline.

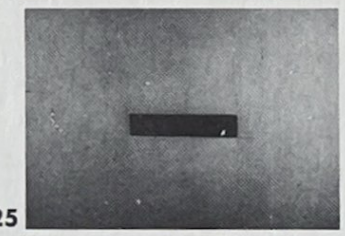

20 Lose large jar -- retain outline.

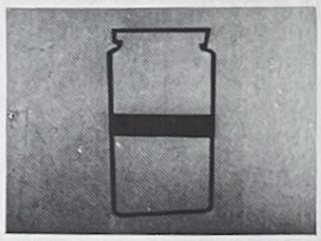

21 Gray and black appear in small outlines.


22 White appears in large outline. Three different values indicate different strengths of coffee -- medium, light, and strong.

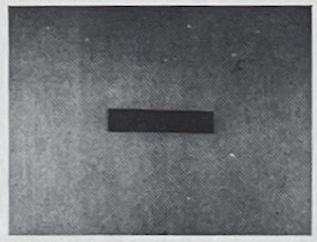

23 Hold center shape -- smaller symbols disappear.


24 Retain outline.


25 Outline of jar contracts to single band...


26 ...which, in turn, again becomes part of jar.

27 Pop back lettering.


28 Contract again.

29 Original cup and saucer.

30 Cup and saucer dissolve to live objects. Jar appears.

How to develop a "talking" storyboard

1 Here we will follow the development of a storyboard, step by step. It will be the first, rough storyboard, known as a "talking" board because it will be "talked over" with the client before the artist goes ahead. It will be submitted to the client for his initial approval of the over-all concept. Once the talking board has been approved, a final, detailed board will be made. This final board is called a "working" board and the entire production will be made from it. But the talking board is the essential first step.

Our assignment is to create an animated commercial for a breakfast cereal we will call Pops. The first four panels below indicate only the outline of the plot. They are not to be shown to the client. They could be called our "thinking" board.

The irate husband dislikes what is in his cereal bowl.

The wife remembers Pops.

She rushes out and buys a box of Pops.

She serves it -- husband is happy -- all ends well.

2 Now let's fill in the gaps in our story and add more action. The gray patches indicate the additional action we need. We'll add a panel at the beginning to show how happy this couple was before the problem of the bad breakfast came up. We'll add more action by showing the wife's trip to the store in greater detail. And we'll add another panel to show the couple eating and a last panel to display the product.

It doesn't pay to spend too much time on rendering your first talking board. The client may not like the basic idea at all and you will have wasted a lot of time and effort. Or, if he does like the concept, there may be a lot of changes suggested. But, although you shouldn't do too finished a job of rendering, your talking board must tell its story very clearly. It will be passed around much more than the average comprehensive.

Here's our happy couple until...

...husband hates his cereal.

Wife remembers Pops.

She hurries to the store...

...and buys Pops.

She hurries home...

...to serve Pop -- Pops.

Everything is now sweetness and light...

...thanks to Pops.

3 This is it

Having returned from the client with an okay on the concept of our talking storyboard, we go back to work. We want to have our story really complete before we start our actual working board. So we add a close-up of the wife's unhappy face when her husband is ranting about the cereal, we extend her trip to the store, we change her dress to street clothes when she leaves the house and then change them back to a dress when she returns. And we've added three panels at the very end in order to increase the number of times the product is displayed in the important final section. Note that we are using a more finished style in our art. These pictures represent the full number of panels we will use in our final working storyboard.

ANNOUNCER: HERE IS A HAPPY COUPLE...

...HAPPY -- UNTIL THE DAY SHE SERVED THE WRONG KIND OF BREAKFAST.

WHAT IS THE RIGHT KIND OF BREAKFAST?

WHY, OF COURSE, POPS.

SO SHE WENT RIGHT...

...OUT OF THE HOUSE...

...TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY...

...FOR A LARGE ECONOMY SIZE OF POPS.

THEN SHE RUSHED RIGHT...

...BACK HOME AND...

...PROCEEDED TO SERVE...

...THE DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS CEREAL TO A HUSBAND...

...WHO PROCLAIMED HER AN ANGEL...

...FOR INTRODUCING HIM TO THAT HEAVENLY POPS.

SO, FOR THAT OUT-OF-THIS WORLD TASTE -- GET POPS.

AS WE SAID -- HERE IS A HAPPY COUPLE...

...THANKS TO POPS...

...THE "UP-FRONT" BREAKFAST CEREAL!

The finished storyboard

This is the complete storyboard for the Pops cereal commercial. It now includes the art, the announcer's narration, and the description of the action. It is done on storyboard paper and is shown here almost one-half actual size.

Storyboard paper comes in pads with panels for the illustrations, and other panels below them for the copy. Any narration accompanying a picture is entered in the panel below that picture. Copy needed to explain the action in the picture is entered under this, in the same panel. Above each picture panel there is a space for the panel to be numbered, so you can be sure your panels will be viewed in the correct order.

Storyboard pads are available with different numbers of panels. A pad with twelve panels for pictures and twelve for copy is the most popular. The panels are perforated so you can take out any panel and replace it with another. Sheets of panels may be taped together for presentation to the client.

On the next three pages you will find a glossary of terms and professional jargon used in television. Check these pages to find the meanings of all terms used in this storyboard with which you are not acquainted.

1

ANNOUNCER: HERE IS A HAPPY COUPLE...

Open with heads of man and wife. Hearts pop on and off.

2

...HAPPY -- UNTIL THE DAY SHE SERVED THE WRONG KIND OF BREAKFAST.

Cut to scene as irate husband jumps up and down.

3

WHAT IS THE RIGHT KIND OF BREAKFAST?

Man in mean mood -- wife perplexed. Start truck-in to wife's head.

4

WHY, OF COURSE, POPS.

At completion of truck-in --pop in thought balloon.

5

SO SHE WENT RIGHT...

Cross-dissolve to woman walking out of house.

6

...OUT OF THE HOUSE...

As figure crosses line of house, her hat, coat, and purse pop on.

7

...TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY...

Pan with figure to store.

8

...FOR A LARGE ECONOMY SIZE OF POPS.

Continue pan to interior of store.

9

THEN SHE RUSHED RIGHT...

Pan to right with figure.

10

...BACK HOME AND...

Pan with figure into house. Hat, coat, and purse off as figure enters house.

11

...PROCEEDED TO SERVE...

She serves husband.

12

...THE DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS CEREAL TO A HUSBAND...

Husband tastes content of bowl.

13

...WHO PROCLAIMED HER AN ANGEL...

Happy husband points to wife. Halo pops on over her head.

14

...FOR INTRODUCING HIM TO THAT HEAVENLY POPS.

Man kissing wife -- pop on heart.

15

SO, FOR THAT OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD TASTE -- GET POPS.

Heart dissolves into product.

16

AS WE SAID -- HERE IS A HAPPY COUPLE...

Both hold hands, look at product.

17

...THANKS TO POPS...

Product zooms up -- both reach for it.

18

...THE "UP-FRONT" BREAKFAST CEREAL!

Dissolve out figures of man and wife -- continue to zoom up product --hold product.

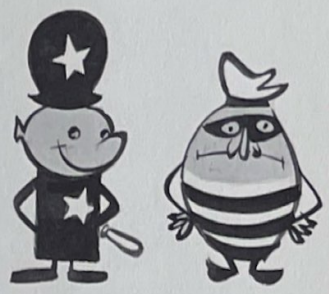
TV terms

Television is a new medium and, like all new mediums, it has developed a language of its own. Some of its terms are borrowed from motion pictures and advertising, but many have been invented to describe the situations that are unique to television. The following definitions will help you both understand and talk this lively new TV lingo.

Action: The motion essential in portraying the story.

Animation: The action or motion of a picture element; also, the preparation of animated cartoons or drawings.

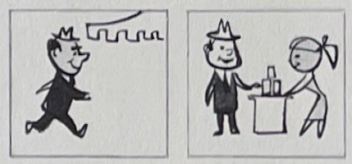
Audio: Sound — the part of television that you hear, as opposed to video, the part you see.



Characters: The actors in a story.

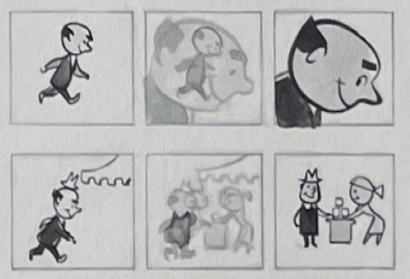
Clip: A section clipped from a film.

Close-up: A close view of the face — or of any subject. All of the above views are close-ups.



Cut: An abrupt stop of one scene or view, and the immediate introduction of another.

Cycle: Completion of one single action.



Dissolve: The fading of one scene as it is replaced by another. This is also called a "cross-dissolve."

Fade in: To bring the picture gradually from dark into a full contrast of light and dark.

Fade out: The reverse of "fade in."

By permission Jell-O Division; General Foods Corp.

Frame: A single unit in the storyboard, or a single unit of the final film.

Hard sell: "Hitting the viewer over the head" with the advertiser's message — that is, recommending the product or service to him directly and forcefully.

Inking and painting: Inking is the tracing of a drawing or design onto cellophane with pen and ink. Painting is covering any specified areas with opaque paint.

Lift: A segment of a commercial which can be taken out and used by itself as a complete shorter commercial.

Courtesy Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp.

Live: Photographs of real people or things — either still pictures or movies.

Long shot: A picture showing a full figure or a distant view. All of the above pictures are long shots.

Match dissolve: Holding one element on the screen as we dissolve from one scene to another.

Medium shot: A picture in between a close-up and a long shot. All of the above pictures are medium shots.

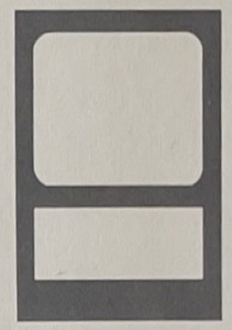
Narration: The description or commentary that accompanies the action. Sometimes called "voice over."

Off screen: When you do not see the subject that is the source of the sound.

On screen: When you see the subject that is the source of the sound.

Open on: To show in the opening shot. If the picture above started a sequence we would say, "Open on a man lying on a bench."

Pan: To follow the movement of a figure or element as it moves — or else to move the camera gradually so as to show a continuous scene or panoramic effect.

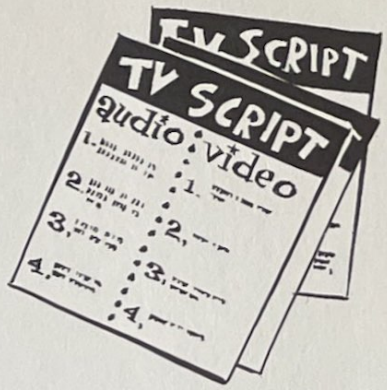


Panel: A section of the storyboard.

Pop on: To appear suddenly on the screen. "Pop off" is the reverse of "pop on."

Product identification: Prominently displaying the product being advertised.

Read: To show up clearly. Here, the two bottom pictures, with stronger contrast, "read" better than the two at the top.



Script: A paper or papers on which all of the elements of the commercial or story are described in detail — the sound (including words and music) as well as the pictorial content of the story line. The audio and video sections are usually placed in separate columns, with the sound and the corresponding action side by side.

Sound track in sinc with action

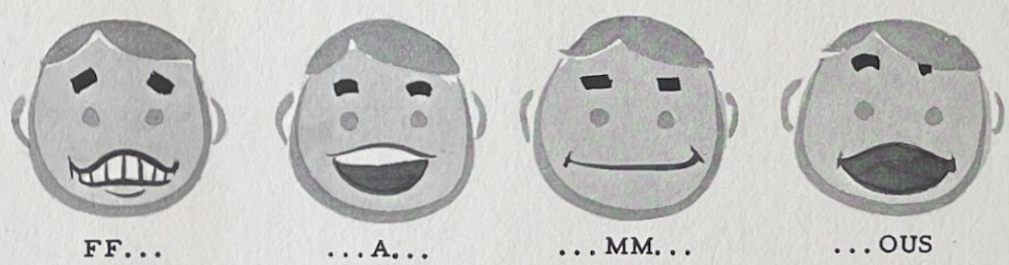
Sound track out of sinc with action

Sinc: Synchronization.

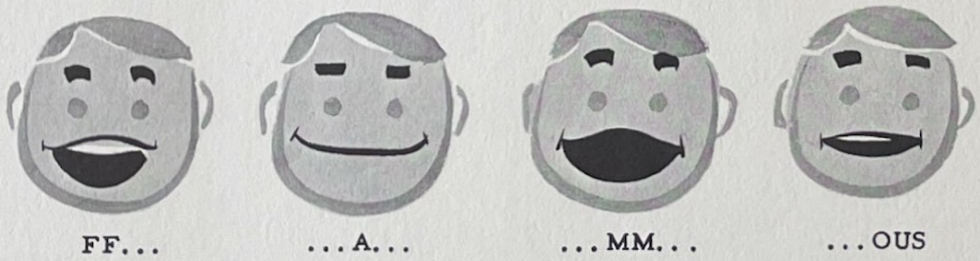
1. "Action in sinc" means that the action should be perfectly synchronized with the narration.

Lip sinc

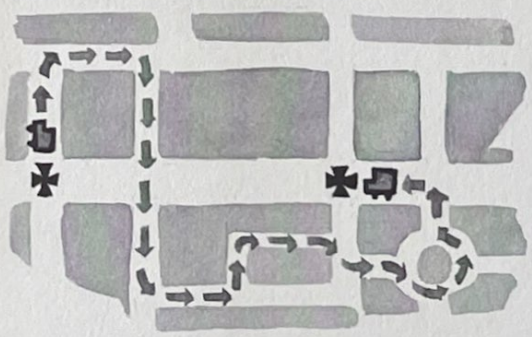
In sinc



Out of sinc



2. "Lip sinc" means that the movement of the animated figure's mouth corresponds exactly with the dialogue.



Soft sell: Delivering the advertiser's message in an indirect or roundabout way, without strong emphasis on buying the product.

Super: Short for "superimposed" — copy which is superimposed over the picture.

Timing: The amount of time allowed for a specific action.

Truck in: To move gradually toward the picture — from a long shot to a medium shot or a close-up. "Truck out" means the reverse of this.

Video: The television picture or the visual part of television.

Wipe off: An object moves across the screen and eliminates words or another object as it passes them.

Wipe on: An object moves across the screen and another object or words appear where the first object has been.

Zoom: A fast truck-in.

How many panels in a "talking" storyboard?

The decision on how many panels to use in a storyboard is an important one, if the board is going to tell its story clearly. There were eighteen panels in the Pops cereal storyboard. But that doesn't mean that eighteen panels will always be what is right. The correct number of panels is dictated both by the length of time the commercial will be on the screen and the action of the story line.

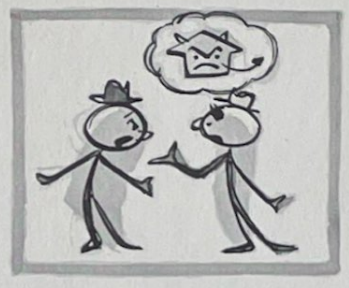
Suppose we have an assignment to create a storyboard for the new Hades Oil Heater. The story is fairly complicated, but it is a good one and we have a whole minute for the commercial. The script calls for two men who meet at a bank, one to deposit money, one to borrow money. The man who is borrowing money is very sad — he has to borrow to keep his house properly heated. His fuel bills are terrible. The saving fellow explains about the fine, new, economical Hades Oil Heater that he has installed in his home. They part. When they meet in the bank again, they are both depositing money. The once-sad man thinks happily of his house that no longer eats up his money because he has installed the new Hades heater.

Now let's go to work and see how many panels we need to tell our story. This is our first attempt — our talking storyboard.

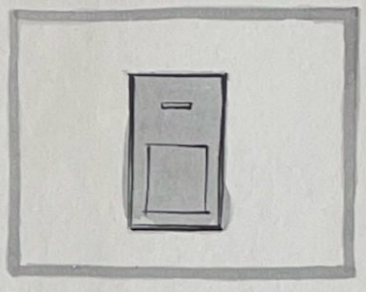
Happy guy running to bank...

...meets sad guy who must borrow money.

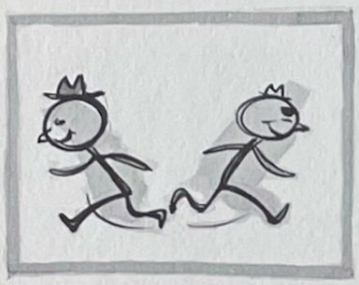
Sad guy pours money into house.



Sad guy complains about house.



Happy guy tells him about new Hades heater.

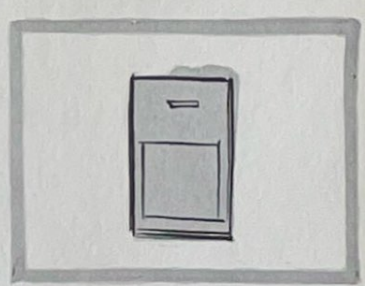


Both go on their way.

They meet again -- both to deposit money.

Sad guy thinks of bad house...

...which is now a good house...



...thanks to his Hades heater.

Too few panels

This storyboard is not detailed enough for the story we are trying to tell. It does not show enough of the intermediate action to get over several important basic points of the story, which are: the economy, the efficiency, and durability of the product. The whole thing is too jumpy and sketchy and the story line is unrelated as we move from picture to picture. It is essential that we expand the story and add more panels. So we try again.

Too many panels

This is just the opposite of the skimpy storyboard. This one tries to say too much, and anyone looking at it could easily get lost in the maze of detail. It has too many panels. Somewhere between the extremes of the too-brief board that doesn't say enough and the over-elaborate board that repeats and confuses we can find a happy medium. Our next step must be to cut out the excess panels.

Open on happy man walking.

He breaks into a run.

Cut to unhappy man walking in opposite direction.

He is still walking.

Both men meet at bank.

Both men walk into bank.

Happy man at savings counter... unhappy man at loan counter.

Men come out of bank.

Unhappy man with borrowed money starts home.

Still walking.

Arrives at house.

Offers money to house.

House grabs money.

Eats money -- snarls for more.

Happy man greets his home.

Withdraws money from home.

Leaves house -- starts running.

Still running.

Arrives at bank -- meets unhappy man again.

They walk into bank.

Happy man saving -- unhappy man borrowing again.

Happy man inquires why.

Unhappy man tells his story.

Happy man gives him advice.

Tells him about happy house.

Hades heater makes a happy house.

It is economical.

It is efficient.

It has durability.

They shake hands.

They leave bank.

Happy man starts home again.

Arrives home.

Takes more money from house.

Starts back to bank.

Still walking.

Meets unhappy man, who is now happy.

They are both depositing money.

Thinks of his enemy the house...

...in which he has installed a Hades heater.

Heater changes house...

...into happy home.

Heater is economical...

efficient...

durable.

Here is our happy medium — the right number of panels

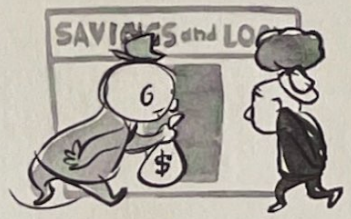
There are enough panels here to tell the story clearly, keep a crisp, interesting pace without being jumpy, and show the new heater a satisfactory number of times. Only the unnecessary and confusing panels have been eliminated.

You will notice that on this storyboard we now have only twenty-eight panels as against forty-five on the previous board. Check back on the preceding page and notice how many extraneous panels were taken out. However, we still show the client's product as many times as in the previous storyboard — since the product identification is the reason for producing the commercial in the first place.

Read the captions. See how much faster this storyboard moves, and how much clearer it is than the preceding ones.

Happy man walking to bank.

Unhappy man doing same.



Both arrive at bank.

One deposits money, the other borrows.

Both leave bank.

Unhappy man gives money to house.

Happy man takes money from house.

On way to bank again.

They meet again.

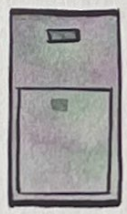
One deposits, one borrows more money.

Happy man wonders about other's gloom.

Unhappy man explains.

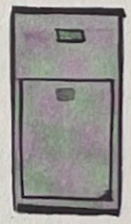
Happy man brags about his house.

Thanks to his heater...

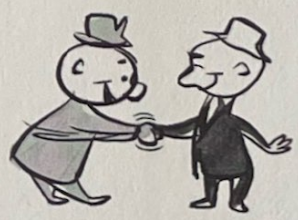


...there is low cost...

...efficiency...



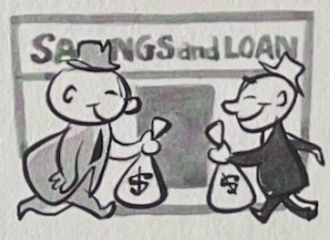
...durability.



They shake hands.

Happy man goes home again.

Withdraws more money from house.



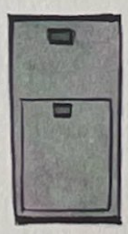
Meets his friend again at bank -- both now carry money.

They both deposit money.

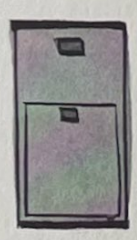
Unhappy man thinks of his money-eating house...

...which, after he installed a Hades heater...

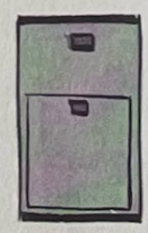
...became an angel of a house because of Hades heater's...



...low cost...



...efficiency...



...durability.

The right number of panels in relation to timing

Here is a storyboard depicting a commercial for a new cold tablet. The announcer explains the virtues of the tablet. Diagrams of the human body demonstrate the tablet's quick action.

At first glance it looks as if the diagrammatic part of this storyboard is the major part of the whole commercial. But from the point of view of timing, this is deceiving. Look at the amount of narration in the first four panels, when the announcer is talking. Then look at the proportionately small amount of narration in the remaining eight diagrammatic panels.

The announcer has been given only four panels because he's only talking – there is little action to depict. Nevertheless, his narration takes up two-thirds of the time of the commercial.

Unless this is made clear, however, the prospective advertising client may object that, as far as he can see from this storyboard, the diagrammatic part is overemphasized and his announcer doesn't have enough time to put over his hard sell. The simplest way to show that this is not so is to indicate the amount of time each panel will take. Of course it is not possible to indicate the exact time in seconds, but we can give the approximate time.

We use the figure of sixty seconds in describing a commercial. This means in professional practice that sixty seconds is allowed for the pictures – but only fifty-eight seconds is allowed for the sound. One and one-half seconds of sound are taken off the beginning and one-half at the end.

NOW A NEW DISCOVERY FOR COLD SUFFERERS! FEILER COLD TABLETS. F-E-I-L-E-R... FEILER, THAT'S RELIEF SPELLED BACKWARDS. BUT THERE'S NOTHING BACKWARD ABOUT FEILER. IT'S WAY OUT IN FRONT OF ALL OTHER COLD REMEDIES. AS GOOD AS A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION.

Open on announcer.

19 seconds

TESTS IN LEADING HOSPITALS PROVED ITS RELIEF TO DISCOMFORT... RELIEF FROM ACHES AND PAINS DUE TO COLDS...

Slow truck back.

7 seconds

...RELIEF FROM ALL COLD MISERIES...AND TWICE AS FAST AS OTHER COLD REMEDIES.

Continue slow truck...

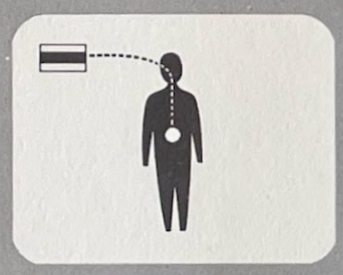
6 seconds

COMPARE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FEILER COLD TABLETS WITH OTHER LEADING COLD TABLETS IN THIS DIAGRAM.

...to reveal diagram.

7 seconds

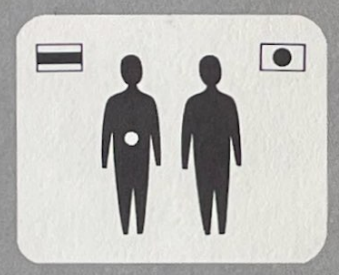
While the announcer occupies only four panels, notice that the amount of narration accompanying them is double the amount for the remaining eight panels. To give you a better idea of the timing, we have indicated the number of seconds in the bottom bar of each panel.



OTHER REMEDIES, WHEN TAKEN, ARE TARDY IN THEIR ACTION.

Cut to diagram filling screen as "other brand" pill goes into body.

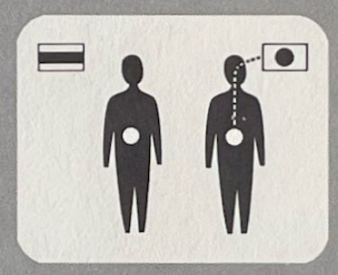
4 seconds



HOW DIFFERENT WHEN FEILER COMES INTO THE PICTURE!

Pop in second figure along with Feiler package.

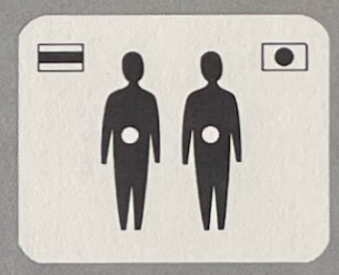
3 seconds



WHEN TAKEN AS DIRECTED...

Pill from Feiler package into figure.

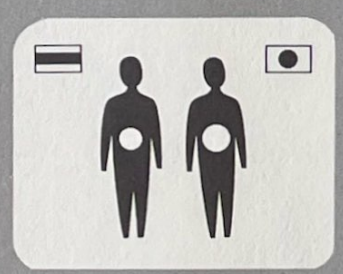
2 seconds



...IT WORKS TWICE AS FAST...

Hold on both figures -- relief zone same size.

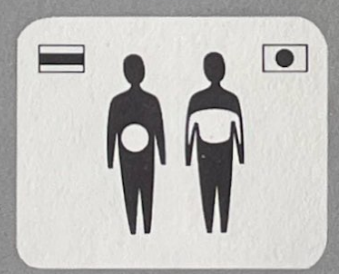
2½ seconds



...SPEEDING RELIEF...

Feiler tablet grows larger than "other brand."

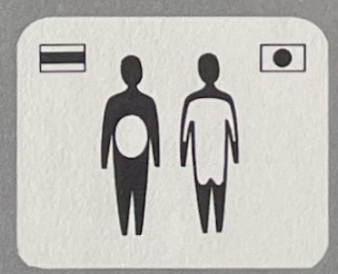
1½ seconds



...TO ALL PARTS...

"Other brand" grows little larger. Client's product grows much faster.

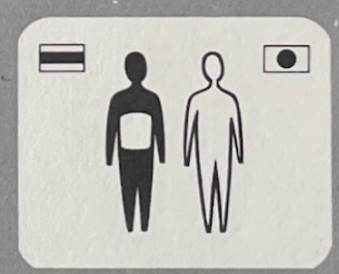
1½ seconds



...OF THE BODY.

Feiler tablet is rapidly filling body.

1½ seconds



REMEMBER, GET FEILER FOR RELIEF!

Feiler figure now has total relief. Relief to "other brand" figure is only partial. Zoom up package... close-up on word "Feiler." Hold.

3 seconds

With these eight pictures, note that we have very little narration. Therefore, the rest of the storyboard moves much faster. Actually, while the narration in the top four panels required 39 seconds for the hard sell, the narration in the remaining eight panels of demonstration required only 19 seconds.

Timing–making three separate commercials from one

Timing does not always mean planning the number of seconds for each panel. You may be asked to design a TV commercial that can be used in three different time segments. If this sounds complicated, the study of a storyboard designed for Alcoa Wrap will give us a good example that will clarify the problem. Let's look at the assignment and then study the various steps taken in the execution of the storyboard.

Alcoa Wrap requested an 80-second commercial to introduce a new-size foil wrap. Foil wrap had always been 18 inches wide. This meant that there was considerable waste when wrapping small objects, so Alcoa was producing a new aluminum foil wrap that was only 12 inches wide. They asked for a commercial with an entertaining announcement of the new-size foil, as well as a demonstration of the "no waste" idea.

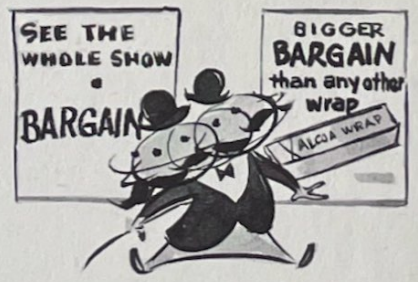
The problem was to design one commercial that could be broken up into three separate commercials – one of 80 seconds, one of 60 seconds, and one of 20 seconds. All versions included the "hard sell," which was 20 seconds long. The 20-second version was made up of only the "hard sell." The 60-second version had to be a complete commercial with entertainment and "hard sell." The 80-second commercial added further entertainment to the 60-second version – 10 seconds at the beginning and 10 seconds more at the end. Now let's examine the development of this commercial through all of its various stages.

Before starting work on a storyboard that will solve these various problems, the first step must be taken: The story line must be created and approved by the client. The artist submitted the talking board you see below. His key idea was to bring out the special features of Alcoa by contrasting them with the features of a carnival. A little carnival barker demonstrates that Alcoa Wrap is stronger, more compact, longer, and less wasteful than any of the side-show features at the carnival.

Open on carnival barker. One sign shows features of carnival, the other the features of Alcoa.

Carnival sign says "Strong" -- Alcoa sign says "Stronger."

Carnival sign says Tom Thumb is small, but the 12-inch Alcoa Wrap is smaller and easy to store.



Carnival sign says see the whole show, it's a bargain. But Alcoa is a bigger bargain than any other because there is no waste.

Wind up by zooming up package of Alcoa.

The 60-second version

Alcoa liked the first, rough talking board, shown on the previous page, but only as far as the general approach was concerned. Instead of the carnival barker, they wanted to use a little magician figure that they had used before. So we eliminated the barker storyboard and started over, putting their little magician on a theater stage.

You remember that Alcoa had requested an entertaining announcement as well as a demonstration of the "No Waste" feature of the smaller-sized foil. The little magician would now supply the entertainment. A segment of live action would supply the demonstration and "hard sell" and a super would emphasize that there was no waste.

The 60-second storyboard shown below is the main part of the commercial and includes both the animated entertainment and the client's message.

Courtesy Aluminum Co. of America

Open on stage, curtain down.

Curtain rising.

Magician bows.

Lifts up first leaf of blank paper.

Turns up next page.

Still a blank page.

Word "New" pops out, knocks magician off screen.

Magician tip-toes back on.

As he looks under leaf, balloon appears.

Balloon zooms up full.

Entertainment
30 seconds

Alcoa package tied to balloon.

Magician takes package, places it on easel.

Pulls foil wrap from package.

Hammers -- makes wrap into hammock.

Climbs into foil hammock.

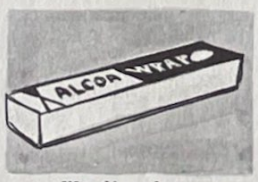
Leans over, starts to paint on easel.

Falls on face -- hammock rolls back into package.

Words on easel change as he watches.

Reaches off screen for paint, starts painting.

Zoom up Alcoa package.



We dissolve to live Alcoa package.

Oven scene -- live (foil under meat). Super says "no waste."

Freezer scene -- live (food wrapped in foil). Hold super.

Drawer scene -- live. Hold super.

Package alone -- live.

Hard sell
20 seconds

Zoom back to package on easel.

Magician takes Alcoa package from easel.

Puts Alcoa package under his hat.

Curtain comes down on this action.

The end.

More
entertainment
10 seconds

The 80-second version and the 20-second "lift"

In order to extend the 60-second storyboard to 80 seconds it was necessary to do a little padding. The simplest way to do this is to add 10 seconds to the beginning and 10 seconds to the end of the commercial. These additional 20 seconds of action contribute to the entertainment value, but they can be dropped without affecting the original 60-second section. The 10 seconds added to the beginning of the story show our little magician approaching and entering the theater. The 10 seconds added at the end show him leaving the theater. This gives us our 80-second version.

Now there was the 20-second "hard sell" lift to be considered. Twenty seconds is such a short time that it permits little or no entertainment – just a direct "hard sell" that gives the essential points with no frills. So for this 20-second lift, only the live demonstration section was used – the photographs of the package and of Alcoa Wrap being used and stored. These live panels tell the story – they can be shown alone at any time.

Magician on way to theater. | He passes some girls. | They admire him. | He climbs stairs to stage door. | Pan to stage with curtain down.

Ten seconds of extra entertainment

Open on stage, curtain down. | Curtain rising. | Magician bows. | Lifts up first leaf of blank paper. | Turns up next page.

Still a blank page. | Word "New" pops out, knocks magician off screen. | Magician tip-toes back on. | As he looks under leaf, balloon appears. | Balloon zooms up full.

Alcoa package tied to balloon. | Magician takes package, places it on easel. | Pulls foil wrap from package. | Hammers -- makes wrap into hammock. | Climbs into foil hammock.

Leans over, starts to paint on easel. | Falls on face -- hammock rolls back into package. | Words on easel change as he watches. | Reaches off screen for paint, starts painting. | Zoom up Alcoa package.

We dissolve to live Alcoa package. | Oven scene -- live (foil under meat). Super says "no waste." | Freezer scene -- live (food wrapped in foil). Hold super. | Drawer scene -- live. Hold super. | Package alone -- live.

This is the 20-second lift that can be used by itself. In the initial planning of this storyboard, when we decided to use live action for this demonstration segment, we were planning ahead so that this live segment could be the 20-second lift — complete in itself. Whenever you are faced with this sort of timing-lift problem, thinking and planning ahead will save you a great deal of work in the long run.

Zoom back to package on easel. | Magician takes Alcoa package from easel. | Puts Alcoa package under his hat. | Curtain comes down on this action. | The end.

Open, panning from stage to stage door. | Magician exits and goes down stairs. | Tips his hat to girls. | This reveals package of Alcoa Wrap. | Zoom up package.

Ten seconds of extra entertainment

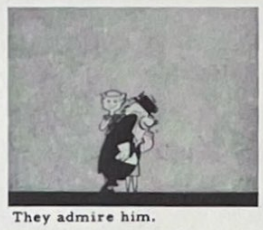
The finished commercial for Alcoa Wrap

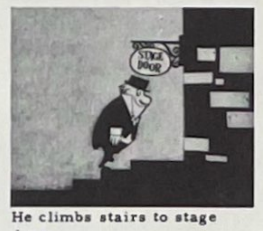
Here are clips of the final art. Notice how many times there is a close-up of the product – this is essential in any good commercial. Gay background music was used throughout the entire commercial except in the 20-second live portion – to which "hard sell" narration was added. As we told you previously, the secret of a good commercial is to be able to turn off the sound and still get the entire story – its humor and, most important, its message.

Sixty-second commercial

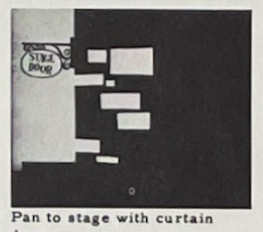
Magician on way to theater.

He passes some girls.


They admire him.

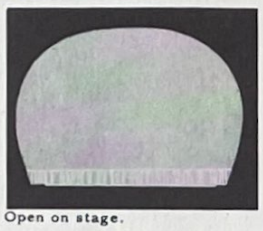


He climbs stairs to stage door.



Pan to stage with curtain down.

This first segment of the board is pure entertainment and can be dropped without affecting the 60-second segment.


Open on stage.

Curtain rising.

Magician bows.

Lifts up first leaf of blank paper.

Turns up next page.

Still a blank page.

Word "New" pops out, knocks magician off screen.

Magician tiptoes back on.

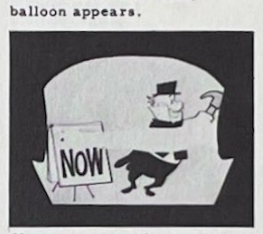
As he looks under leaf, balloon appears.

Balloon zooms up full.

Alcoa package tied to balloon.

Magician takes package, places it on easel.

Pulls foil wrap from package.



Hammers -- makes wrap into hammock.

Climbs into foil hammock.

Leans over, starts to paint on easel.

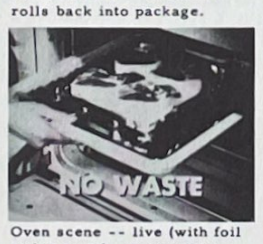
Falls on face -- hammock rolls back into package.

Words on easel change as he watches.

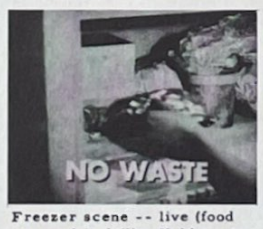
Reaches off screen for paint, starts painting.

Zoom up Alcoa package.

We dissolve to live Alcoa package.



Oven scene -- live (with foil under meat). Super says "no waste."



Freezer scene -- live (food wrapped in foil). Hold super.

Drawer scene -- live. Hold super.

Package alone -- live.

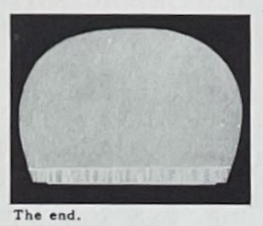
This segment is "hard sell" — a direct, live demonstration of the use of the product. The super, "No Waste," is used in much of this sequence because this was the main reason the commercial was produced in the first place. This segment is the logical choice for the 20-second lift — it can deliver a total selling message all by itself.

Zoom back to package on easel.

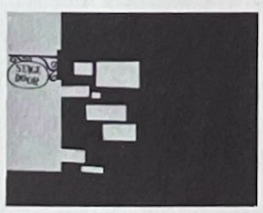
Magician takes Alcoa package from easel.

Puts Alcoa package under his hat.

Curtain comes down on this action.


The end.

This final segment is entertainment. The bottom row can be dropped, with the top row, when necessary, to retain the original 60-second version. Note that the client's product is shown in the final frames at the end of the film — for "remembrance value."



Open, panning from stage to stage door.

Magician exits and goes downstairs.

Tips his hat to girls.

This reveals package of Alcoa Wrap.

Zoom up package.

Creating the storyboard

The basic principles for creating professional storyboards are the same — whether you make them for a national or local sponsor.

Keeping the budget low is often of paramount importance — especially for the small client. As we pointed out in the introduction, you don't have to feel that you have to work for Walt Disney or the big networks. There is a great need for new talent on the local stations in small cities. For every sponsor on a national level, there are hundreds of small local sponsors, and cost is important for the small account.

The following storyboards were designed for local sponsors with economy in mind. For each storyboard we indicate the right approach and also the things to avoid — the wrong approach. We include narration and descriptive action where both are necessary to tell the story. Where either one will suffice, it is used alone.

Storyboard for a local dairy

A local dairy delivers fresh milk early every morning to be sold in neighborhood grocery stores. The product is comparatively popular and many people are buying it "by name." Other customers, however, are just asking for a quart of milk. Our aim is to design a commercial that will get these customers to ask for the client's product by its brand name.

FLOW MILK
FLOW MILK
DELIVERED FRESH EVERY MORNING
WHY DON'T YOU TRY FLOW MILK -- THE CREAMY MILK?
Open on milk truck coming toward viewer.
DELIVERED FRESH EVERY MORNING...
Milk truck continues toward viewer -- pop on super.
... TO YOUR GROCER -- WHERE YOUR NEIGHBORS BUY IT.
Cut to store with crowd going in.
EVERYONE ELSE THINKS IT'S GREAT -- JOIN THEM!
Cut to live announcer.

Wrong approach There are several things wrong or undesirable here. The three-quarter view of the delivery truck would be expensive to animate — more drawings would be necessary to show the truck coming forward. Also, this view does not give good brand-name display. The super in the second panel pops on in a routine, unimaginative way. The crowd going into the store lacks visual impact because we have not shown that they are purchasing the product. Bringing in the announcer in the last panel raises the cost of the commercial because he is an expensive man to hire. Moreover, having him point his finger at the audience is more likely to irritate than persuade them to buy the product. And there is no final product picture for remembrance value.

Right approach This is well planned and inexpensive. The flat truck is not only cheaper to animate than the three-quarter view, but it displays the brand name of the milk better. We have introduced a humorous note with the cow — then we pick up our truck, which passes the billboard, where emphasis is placed on the freshness of the milk. The driver arrives at the grocery store and deposits his product. We find customers coming in immediately to buy the milk. Finally we end on a close-up of the client's product. The whole thing is logical, emphasizing our objective — brand-name remembrance. There is product identification almost throughout. This right approach flows much more smoothly and is better integrated than the wrong approach above.

Storyboard for a drug company

A drug company is introducing a new sleeping tablet. They don't want an announcer holding a bottle and hitting the viewer over the head with the usual spiel. A light touch is asked for, so animation is the answer.

POOR CHAP.
HE WENT TO BED EVERY NIGHT...
...TO TOSS AND TURN --
--NEXT MORNING TO WORK FEELING LOGY.
THEN HE TOLD HIS FRIEND HE COULDN'T SLEEP...
...AND LEARNED ABOUT MORPHEUS TABLETS.
ONE EVERY NIGHT...
PLEASANT DREAMS.

Wrong approach

The most obvious thing wrong here is that there is no product identification in any segment, not even the all-important finish. This storyboard takes no advantage whatever of the imaginative light touch that is possible with animation. The light touch was requested but this is dull — there's good reason to feel it might put the viewer to sleep without the help of the product.

Right approach

This has the light touch requested by the client. The hero is an appealing personality. The introduction of the moon is imaginative, and through it we introduce the client's product, amusingly and earlier in the commercial. This is taking full advantage of the animation medium. It is good, not because it has more panels, but because it is more creative and livelier. Because there is less changing of scenes, this will be less expensive to produce. The product is in evidence throughout almost half of the entire commercial — and we end the commercial on a close-up of the bottle of sleeping tablets.

26 Storyboard for a live commercial for a beauty shop

A local beauty shop wants to advise the ladies of its new telephone number. It wants them to remember its location and its fine services, but, most important, it wants them to notice the phone number.

The shop requests a live commercial because it wants as much realism as possible. Whenever realism is needed, animation is out. It is much more convincing to see a real person mixing a cake, or polishing a car, or using a shampoo.

A live film can often be made economically without motion picture studio facilities. Often a good effect can be accomplished by using still photographs and filming them. Through this process we can dissolve, pan across, move back and forth and create an illusion of motion as we move from one photograph to another. It is sometimes a little difficult to tell that a commercial like this is not actually filmed in a studio with live actors acting out their roles in front of movie cameras. This method saves the very great expense of setting up in a live studio with costly technical crews which are not always available in many areas.

WANT TO LOOK LOVELY AT ALL TIMES...
...WHEN YOU ARE SHOPPING...
...AT BRIDGE WITH FRIENDS...
...OR AT LUNCH WITH THE GIRLS?
THEN PHONE SPRUCE 4321.
FOR YOUR BEAUTY NEEDS...
...FACIALS, PERMANENTS...
...AND MANICURES -- REMEMBER SPRUCE 4321.

Wrong approach

The principal request of the advertiser was for a commercial that would impress the viewer with the phone number. Although the phone number is given twice in the narration, it does not appear on the screen. There are no close-ups of well-groomed ladies to convince the viewer of the effects of a visit to the beauty shop. Everything is too small and lacking in emphasis. Moreover, the scenes indicated would be difficult and expensive to set up or photograph. We also have gotten involved with eleven different models.

In the last three frames, one head pops on the screen after the other very quickly, and the viewer does not have a chance to concentrate on any one of them. We miss the big image, the final impact. Also, there is no point in introducing the design elements here — this is a live commercial, and the design hinders the prospective patron from identifying herself with the subjects shown.

Right approach

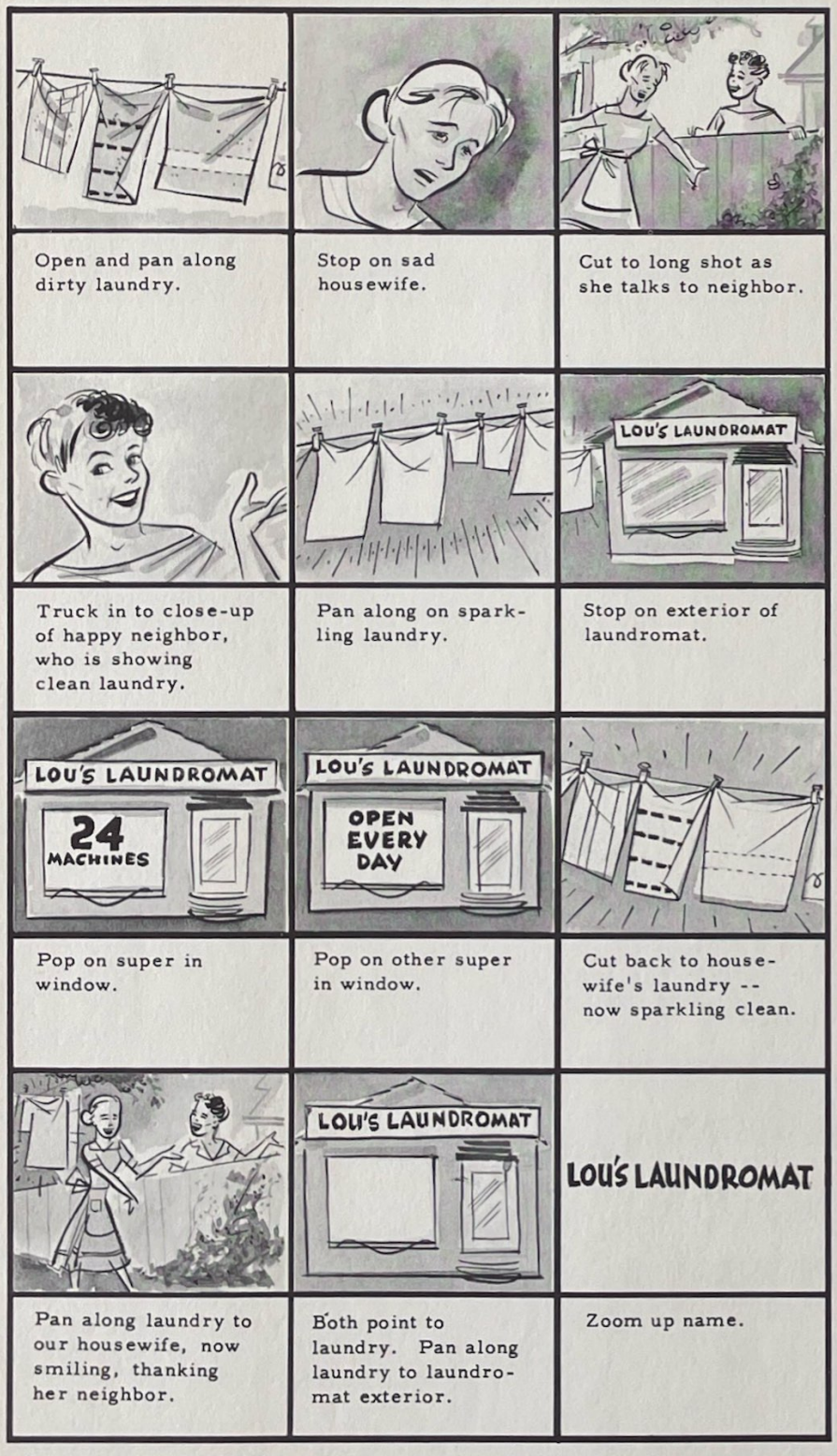
Remember that the advertiser wanted to emphasize the phone number. In this approach the phone number is the first and last thing we see. It remains on the screen throughout a good part of the commercial. We introduce the convenient location — and, since this is a beauty shop, we have close-ups of the ladies' hairdos, their faces, and their hands to bear witness to the beauty shop's fine work. Twice during the commercial we show a view of the shop. And, most important of all, we end with the client's phone number. In contrast to the "wrong approach" above — where eleven models were used — we use only two here.

SP 4321
SP 4321
SP 4321
SP 4321
SPRUCE 4321 IS THE PHONE NUMBER...
...OF THE MOST CONVENIENT LOCATION IN TOWN --
--MARTHA'S BEAUTY SHOP AT 106 MAIN STREET.
PHONE SPRUCE 4321 AND OUR RECEPTIONIST...
...WILL MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR A PERMANENT...
...THAT WILL BE ATTRACTIVE...
...FROM ALL ANGLES.
FOR A FACIAL THAT GIVES YOU THAT NEW LOOK...
...OR A MANICURE TO MAKE...
...LOVELY HANDS LOOK LOVELIER...
...TRY MARTHA'S BEAUTY SHOP.
SP 4321
PHONE SPRUCE 4321.

Storyboard for a live commercial for a laundromat

A local laundromat wants to advertise its services. There is no actual product used in the commercial and a picture of a whole room full of washing machines would be dismal. The problem is to sell the idea that the service of the laundromat is simple, convenient and desirable.

EVERYONE USES LOU'S LAUNDROMAT. | JUST DEPOSIT A QUARTER IN THE MACHINE. | DROP IN YOUR DIRTY CLOTHES... | ...AND IN A FEW MINUTES... | ...YOU TAKE OUT YOUR CLEAN LAUNDRY... | ...CARRY IT HOME... | ..HANG IT UP TO DRY. | NOW IT'S READY FOR IRONING.



Open and pan along dirty laundry. | Stop on sad housewife. | Cut to long shot as she talks to neighbor.

Truck in to close-up of happy neighbor, who is showing clean laundry. | Pan along on sparkling laundry. | Stop on exterior of laundromat.

Pop on super in window. | Pop on other super in window. | Cut back to housewife's laundry -- now sparkling clean.

Pan along laundry to our housewife, now smiling, thanking her neighbor. | Both point to laundry. Pan along laundry to laundromat exterior. | Zoom up name.

Wrong approach

We open this commercial with a lot of happy faces and then show the customer going through the whole routine of using the laundromat. Finally she brings the laundry home and puts it on the line. We end up with a scene of her ironing. All this seems like a lot of hard work and certainly contrary to our principal concept of the story line, which is to show the ease, the convenience and the desirability of using the laundromat. It also doesn't show a happy ending. Finally, that very important element of visual identification of the client is lacking. We are told — but never see — the name of the laundromat.

Right approach

Here we start with a sad situation and an unhappy housewife who is told by her neighbor about the wonderfully easy way she can solve the problem of dirty laundry. We introduce the appliance establishment and emphasize the number of washing machines available and the fact that the laundromat is open every day. We then move to a sparkling line of laundry and the housewife, now happy, telling about her pleasant visit to the laundromat. We come to a happy ending for this housewife — as opposed to the ending in the wrong approach above. Throughout this commercial, we have emphasized the benefits that Lou's Laundromat has to offer — without even showing the equipment, because most women don't like to see machinery. In this type of commercial, such an approach is a good way to achieve a favorable emotional response.

The abstract commercial

There are times when neither live action nor animation is the best approach to a commercial. If the lowest possible budget is a necessity, the abstract or design approach is advisable because this makes the least expensive commercial. But there are other times when, budget or no budget, the abstract commercial can convey the message most clearly. This happens when the client is not so much interested in selling a specific product as in selling an idea. The following assignment gives us a good example.

An abstract storyboard for a dry cleaner

A local dry-cleaning establishment, Sparkles Dry Cleaners, is entering into a television campaign to encourage customers to dry-clean their clothes before they store them for the winter. This is the idea we have to sell to the viewer in the commercial.

HAVE THOSE DIRTY CLOTHES...
Open on dirty clothes.
...DRY-CLEANED BEFORE...
Pop on clean ones in place of dirty clothes.
...YOU PUT THEM AWAY...
Pop on shapes for storage units.
...FOR THE WINTER.
Pan right to snow symbol.
SPARKLES
TAKE THEM TO...
Continue panning right to name.
...SPARKLES DRY CLEANERS.
Continue panning for complete name.
SO, WHEN SUMMER COMES...
Continue panning to sun symbol.
...YOUR COATS...
Cross-dissolve to coat.
...YOUR SLACKS...
Truck back to pop on slacks.
...AND YOUR DRESSES WILL BE SPARKLING CLEAN...
Pop on dress.
...THANKS TO S-P-A-R-K-L-E-S (SPELL)...
Pop on letters in sinc.
...DRY CLEANERS.
Reverse black and white of letters and panels.

HAVE THOSE DIRTY CLOTHES...
Open on soiled clothes.
...GO TO SPARKLES...
Pan them into store.
...THE FINEST IN TOWN...
Eliminate soiled areas as they go in.
...FOR DRY CLEANING.
Truck into suit.
DO THIS BEFORE YOU PUT THAT SUIT...
Pop line about suit.
...OR DRESS AWAY...
Pan right to dress as you pop line around it.
...FOR THE WINTER MONTHS.
Hold line -- cross-dissolve to snow.
AND WHEN SUMMER RETURNS...
Cross-dissolve to sun.
...YOU WILL LOOK BRIGHT IN THAT SUIT..
Pop on suit in place of sun.
...OR IN THAT DRESS.
Pop on dress.
SO BE BRIGHT AND SEND THEM...
Cross-dissolve to store.
...TO SPARKLES DRY CLEANERS NOW.
Zoom up sign.
SPARKLES

Wrong approach

This storyboard does not flow smoothly. It starts by showing dirty clothes — then the clean clothes, then the symbol of storage. We suddenly jump to the symbol of winter. We make an abrupt change to the client's name — which reads across two frames, so it is not visible all at once on the screen. We jump from this to the symbol of the sun — make another abrupt jump to an abstract coat, then other clothes in the next two frames. We jump again to the sponsor's name — which is difficult to read — and suddenly reverse it. It is still difficult to read.

There is no sense of continuity from beginning to end — it is hard to keep up with the visual message. And at no time have we seen the sponsor's name forming a good, readable unit in one panel.

Right approach

Here our storyboard avoids the faults of the previous one and achieves a smooth continuity throughout. After opening on the dirty clothes going into the sponsor's establishment, we promptly introduce the name. Next we truck in on the symbol of the dress already being cleaned in the establishment. We continue showing sparkling clothes — and then show them being stored. The panel changes to a window and we see snow outside. Spring comes and we are introduced to the symbol of the sun. We keep the symbol of the sun and add the sparkling clothes. Still keeping the sun symbol, we introduce the client's name, and end on a highly readable client identification.

NO MATTER WHERE YOU TRAVEL--
Open on map with car going west.
--TO THE EAST...
Car goes east.
...OR TO THE WEST--
Goes west again.
--THE ROADS SEEM WIDER...
Car zigzags on wide highway.
..WHEN YOU ARE IN AN ORDURVE -- THE NEW LITTLE FRENCH CAR..
Move in toward car as it goes left.
...THAT IS BIG INSIDE FOR COMFORT...
Cut to car going inside circle of dots.
..YET SMALL OUTSIDE FOR CONVENIENCE--
Follow car outside circle of dots.
--THE LITTLE CAR FOR...
Pan left on car leaving dots.
BIG VALUE
...A BIG VALUE.
Move in toward car -- pop on copy.
BIG VALUE
SEE IT...
Hold on car as striped background appears.
BIG VALUE
...TODAY--
Pan left with car while it passes striped background.
ORDURVE
--THE ORDURVE.
Hold on striped background as car's name is revealed.

An abstract storyboard for a foreign-car distributor

A distributor of foreign cars wants to advertise a new small French car. He wants to emphasize its roadability, the advantages of its small size when traveling, its maneuverability in traffic, and at the same time its amazing roominess inside. And, finally, he wants to emphasize that it is a great value.

Wrong approach

There is no consistency of pattern here. We go from lines across a map to dots following the car and we end up with stripes — three unrelated patterns. Moreover, the narration should always relate to the picture on the screen, but this does not happen with several of the panels. The copy on the car destroys it as a symbol of the product. We do not see the name until the very end.

NO MATTER WHERE YOU TRAVEL--
Open, panning left with car leaving white line.
--TO THE EAST...
Pan right with car.
...OR TO THE WEST--
Pan left with car.
--THE ROADS SEEM WIDER...
Bands become one wide band.
ORDURVE
...WHEN YOU ARE IN AN ORDURVE--
Pan left with car as it wipes on name.
--THE NEW LITTLE FRENCH CAR...
Move in toward car...
...THAT IS BIG INSIDE FOR COMFORT...
...until it fills the screen.
..YET SMALL OUTSIDE FOR CONVENIENCE--
Pop on two large cars -- small car backs in between them.
--THE LITTLE CAR THAT IS...
Zoom into car...
...A BIG VALUE.
...until it fills the screen.
SEE IT TODAY--
Reverse from light to dark.
ORDURVE
--THE NEW ORDURVE.
Pop on realistic car with name.

Right approach

In this correct version, all the shortcomings of the wrong approach are avoided and the story flows along smoothly. We have a simple movement back and forth as we pan with the car from left to right and right to left. Then the bands dissolve into a single broad band, so that the pattern is kept consistent. Next, on the broad band we introduce our client's car and its name. We stay with the car and move in to show it growing in size. Continuing to move in, we show how roomy the car is. In the next panels we show its maneuverability and truck in again as it grows in size to indicate its big value. From here we go on to emphasize the roominess inside once more. Now a portrait of the car appears with its name below for product identification. At no time do we destroy the symbol or actual appearance of the car by placing words on it.

Flip cards for television

Of all the methods of presenting a commercial in television, the flip-card technique is by far the most economical. Flip cards are a series of photographs, or cartoons, or illustrations that are shown in a sequence of still pictures to tell a full story. Sometimes copy is included on the flip card. If you take a storyboard and select the most important panels – show them in the proper sequence to the viewer and accompany them with a running narration – you are telling your story by the flip-card technique.

An example

We will simplify the animated storyboard for Flow Milk which we did earlier in the lesson and use it on flip cards.

Let's take the three most important areas and render them with some detail. For the absolute in economy, three cards do the work of a whole storyboard.

DAIRY
FLOW MILK
DELIVERED FRESH EVERY MORNING
WHY DON'T YOU...
Open on cow.
...TRY FLOW MILK...
Move back to reveal full scene.
...THE CREAMY MILK?
Delivery truck comes to sign.
IT'S DELIVERED FRESH...
It travels past sign.
...EVERY MORNING...
Move in on sign.
STORE
...TO YOUR GROCER...
Cut to delivery truck at grocery.
...WHERE YOUR NEIGHBORS BUY IT.
Figures move into grocery and bottles pop into window
EVERYONE THINKS IT'S GREAT.
All bottles except one pop off as figures exit.
YOU SHOULD JOIN THEM. BUY FLOW MILK.
Zoom to close-up of Flow milk bottle.

1

We have taken the first three panels of the storyboard and digested them into one single flip card.

2

We have taken the second three panels and digested them to tell the same story in just one single picture.

3

Finally, we have eliminated the people going into the store, and combined the billboard and the client's product in the last flip card.

Contrast of values in television

It is most important that our characters "read" against the background. Characters and background must complement each other. They will do this if we handle our lines and tones correctly, as demonstrated in the diagrams.

As in other artistic mediums, there are specific rules in television concerning the use of tones:

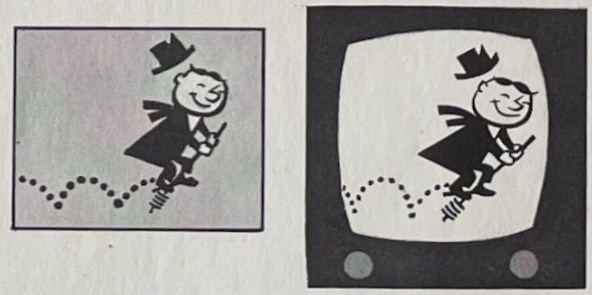
1. Never use a pure white.
2. The range of tones that you can use successfully on television goes from off-white to black.
3. Keep your tones flat – in general, avoid modeling or gradations of tone.

Tone against line: If our characters are massed, and in tone, then the background might be done in line for a good, clear picture.

Line against tone: If the characters are in line with no tone, they would stand out against a tonal background.

Wrong

This drawing looks fine in the original at the left – but see how it will appear on the TV screen. Notice the fuzzy edges where the pure black is against pure white. This is called "bleeding."



Right

You can achieve good contrast by using an almost black against an almost white as at the left. At the right you see how this picture will appear on the TV screen.

This spectrum of grays will give you an idea of the range of tones you can use in television – from off-white to black.

The sponsor's product

The most important feature of the flip card, as well as the filmed commercial, is the product. This is the element that represents the sponsor to the public. Consequently, he will be more critical of the way you handle this than of any other part of the commercial. It is his desire – and rightfully so – that the television version of the product be as close a duplicate of the real product and its packaging as you can possibly make it. This is the thing he wants to sell – the thing by which he is known – and it represents a combination of the good will and the reputation for integrity he has built up over the years. So it's easy to understand that a good, easily recognized image is the keynote where his product is shown.

On the other hand, take a client with a brand-new product. A clean, crisp replica of his new product is necessary so that the public will recognize it quickly upon seeing it in the store. Therefore, it is quite evident that whether the product is old or new, it must be represented correctly.

Although the client balks at the slightest change of his product, many packaging units were designed without considering how they will show up on a television screen. Where products do not "read" properly, they have to be simplified without losing their identifying characteristics.

Whether the product is packaged in a box, a can, or a bottle, the same principles apply in designing the TV version of the product. Modeling and perspective are usually eliminated – a head-on view of the product is best. The high-lights of shiny containers are omitted entirely. Nonessential elements of the package that cannot be understood quickly are taken out. Important copy elements and the product name are emphasized by increasing the weight and size of the lettering, where necessary.

Examples

By permission of the Jell-O Division; General Foods Corp.

Original **TV version**

For the television version of the Jello package, we use a head-on view of the package, eliminating all unimportant elements. The small lettering, which would be illegible on the TV screen, is taken out – while the important advertising message "New Instant Pudding – No Cooking" and the product name are retained. We must be sure to use the symbol Ⓡ or © under the product name if it is registered or the design is copyright.

Courtesy Continental Oil Co.

Original **TV version**

The shiny metal can would not reproduce well on television, so we have rendered it without high lights for the TV version. No roundness is shown in the television rendering of the product – the lettering is more legible on the flat, stylized can. To add importance to the advertising message, the letters have been strengthened. The TV version of this can was designed to fit a highly stylized cartoon, so liberties were taken with perspective.

Courtesy Vick Chemical Co.

Original **TV version**

The long, awkward proportions of the bottle of Vick's Cough Syrup for South American distribution had to be modified for television, while retaining its basic character. Again, we used a head-on view. We simplified the cap, eliminated nonessential copy, and emphasized the important ingredient the sponsor wanted to feature, "Cetamium." We retained the triangle at the bottom of the label because it is the company trademark.

Lettering for television

When you render lettering for television, it is important to choose a type face or letters that are clean and simple. Good, fast legibility is essential. Therefore it is best to use a simple block letter. The use of serifs is not recommended. The message may be interpreted in all caps or in caps and lower-case letters – both are good, so long as they are presented in a simple type.

Wrong

FAMOUS
ARTISTS
SCHOOLS

If you use letters that are too light, such as these, portions will be lost in telecasting.

Wrong again

FAMOUS
ARTISTS
SCHOOLS

On the other hand, if the letters are too bold – like these – they tend to fill up and become hard to read when telecast.

Right

FAMOUS
ARTISTS
SCHOOLS

This weight of letter is not too light and not too bold – it is just right. It insures fast, easy reading on the television screen.

Layout of copy and product

When the picture of the product and the lettering are to appear on the screen at the same time, you must consider their relationship with special care. These elements should be arranged in your layout so that neither will interfere with or overpower the other.

Wrong

Right

The arrangement on the left is an interesting composition and might be acceptable if it were going to be reproduced in print. However, in a medium where motion is involved, the message is hard to read. The arrangement on the right is better because both the product and the message are clear.

Wrong

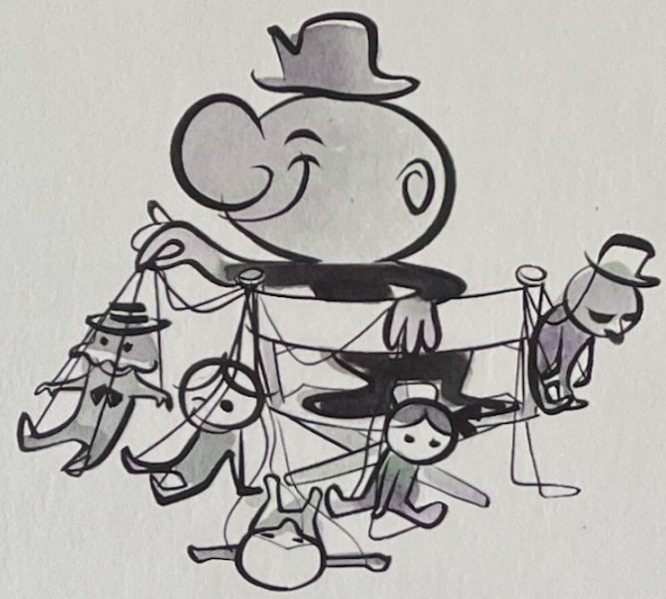
Wrong

Right

In the example at the left, the copy is too light. It is overpowered by the product, and the advertiser's message is apt to be lost. In the center illustration, we can read the message well – so well, in fact, that it overpowers the sponsor's product. The example at the far right is in better balance. The viewer can read the message clearly and associate it with the product.

Courtesy: Ex-Lax, Inc.; American Chicle Co.; Bristol-Myers Co.; Continental Baking Co.; Warner-Lambert Pharmaceutical Co.; Ward Baking Co.; P. Ballantine & Sons; © The Gillette Co.; © Piel Bros.; Nestle Co., Inc.; Procter and Gamble.

Here you see just a few of the countless characters that have appeared on television. Every artist has his own personal approach to the creation of characters, and his own favorite techniques, which may range from loose to tight. Watch your television set often for new approaches to animated drawing styles. New directions and trends appear constantly — and being alert to them will help keep your work fresh and up-to-date.



Characters for television

When a motion picture or stage play is produced, one of the most important jobs is the casting of the characters. Every effort is made to find actors who fit their roles to perfection. This is just as important when designing characters for animation on television. The design and personality of the character that will represent the "star" are just as vital as is the selection of the actor who will play the leading role in a Hollywood production.

But in casting your TV characters you have one essential thing to consider that Hollywood or the theater doesn't have to worry about. Your TV characters are going to come right into the privacy of the viewer's living room. More is required of them, as far as good manners and general likability go, than is required of movie or stage actors who are viewed at a distance in a theater.

An example of what this means occurred a while ago when a famous stage comedy was televised. In the theater version the hero let out a spectacular belch at a moment in the action when it was very funny. At least it was funny when it happened on the stage and at a distance, with a crowd of people around. But on television you saw just the great big head filling the screen — you were not conscious of the rest of the show at the moment — just the huge belch. It wasn't funny at all — it was offensive.

A man's home is his castle. The personality of his TV guests will determine whether he will accept them as friends and be glad to have them drop in, or whether he will do the equivalent of not answering the door bell — turn off his set.

The first thing the home viewer wants is that his TV guests be pleasant and entertaining. He doesn't want to be irritated — he's at home and he wants to relax. He wants to escape from the problems of his day and feel good. Television animation should always have a happy flavor. Although the characters you create may have a problem in the beginning, they shouldn't take it too seriously and the story should always have a lively, happy ending.

The viewer certainly doesn't want his TV guests, no matter how creatively conceived, to be frightening or repulsive. Even a villain doesn't have to be all vile. He can be funny and frustrated and therefore a little appealing. On the whole, the keynote of the TV personality is that it should be amusing.

The next thing to think about in the creation of a proper TV personality is the element of self-identification of the viewer with your character. We all identify ourselves in some way with almost everything we hear, read, or see. That means that your TV character — though highly exaggerated and original in concept — should represent the average and be likable.

When creating and drawing storyboards for live action, unless the story demands it, don't make the men look like movie heroes — very few men do. Don't make the women ultra-glamour girls — very few women are. Make them attractive, normal people — people in whose appearance the viewer can find something of himself or herself.

After the matter of personality comes the question of function, and it is a vital one. We've seen that the TV character should be pleasant and entertaining. But just what physical features should you give him when you are asked to create a particular storyboard? It isn't enough for your hero or heroine to be cute and appealing. The other parts of their bodies must be suitable for the action. Aspects of their physical appearance will often depend largely on their function in the story. Sometimes facial expression is the most important element — then you will emphasize the size of the head. Sometimes the action is the main thing — then you will give special consideration to the size and proportions of the body.

Many ways to create characters for different storyboard requirements will be illustrated on the following pages. But always remember the first principle — TV characters, whether for live action or animated in a novel, creative style, should be the sort of people you would welcome in your own home.

Creating a character to fit a specific problem

The story that follows gives us the high points of a TV commercial for shaving cream. Here we shall demonstrate how to create the hero for this commercial.

A young man, badly in need of a shave, doesn't get the job he applied for. He feels very sad. Then he sees an ad for shaving cream in a drugstore window – buys some – uses it – and gets the job. After the day's work is done, he dances happily with the boss's pretty secretary. And just think, this is all due to the shaving cream!

Now let's get to work and see what kind of character will fit this role best. We'll consider a character that won't do – and why he won't do – and then we'll show you the right man and how he fits into the storyboard.

Wrong

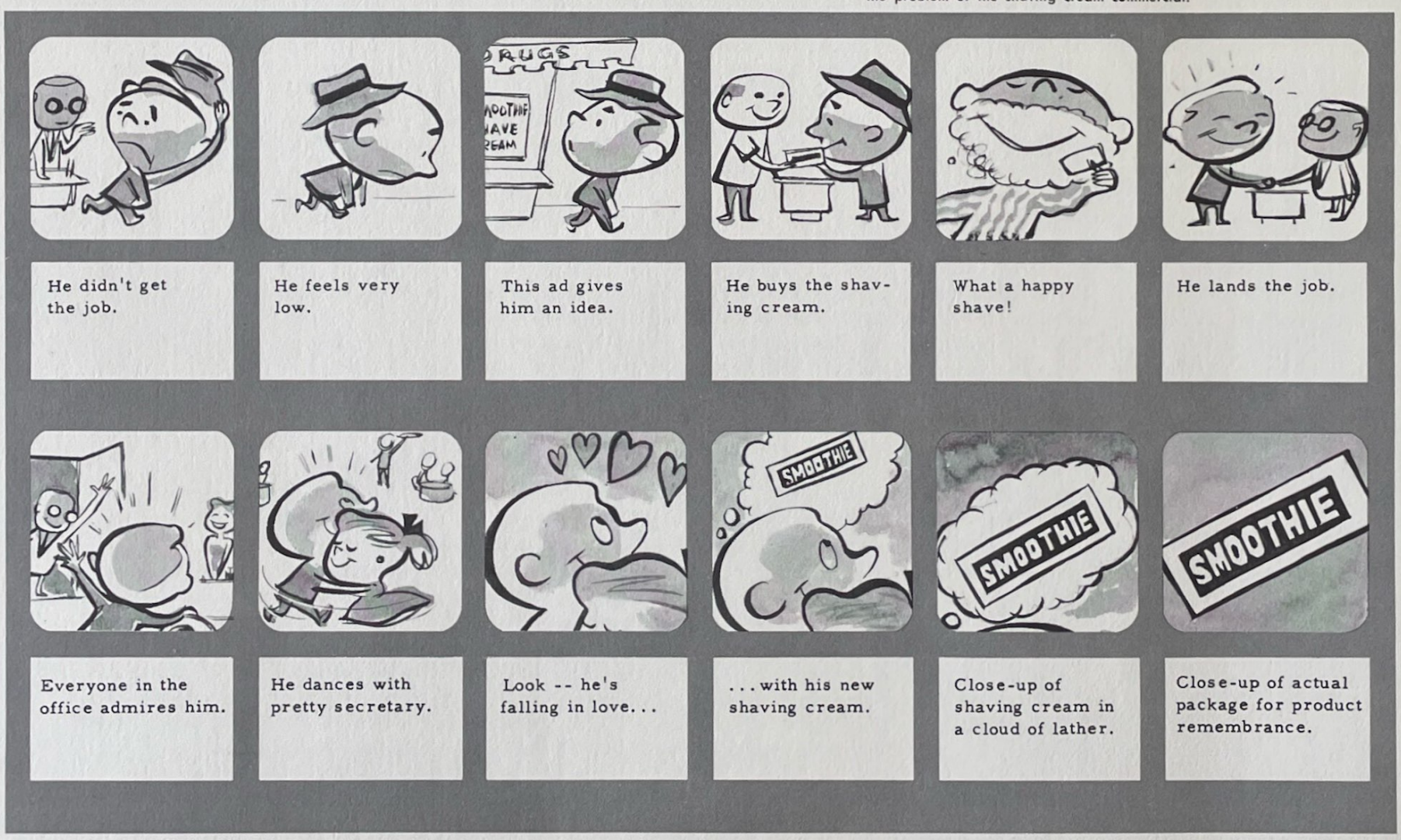
This young man is pleasant enough – but he's not the right type for our commercial.

Facial expressions are more important than action in this story. Our hero must look unhappy when he doesn't get the job – hopeful when he sees the shaving cream display – joyous when he gets the job – and dreamy when he's dancing with the boss's secretary. Also, our hero's head must be large enough to show that he needs a shave, and also to display shaving cream. This character's head is too small to do all this. Because of the long figure we would have to truck in repeatedly from a long shot to a close-up of the face to make the main points of the story. So let's try again.

Right

This little fellow is a more logical solution to our problem. Since the action is not the most important thing in the story, his small body will serve just as well as a larger one – and all the other figures can be proportioned to it for a humorous effect. His large face will allow a variety of expressions to show up clearly even in long shots. He will be easier to truck in toward, and the close-ups will be effective.

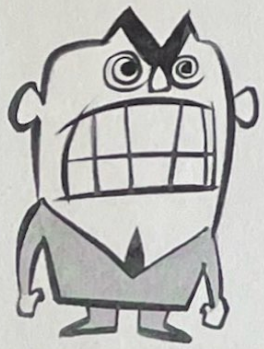
Now see how effectively our little fellow with the big head solves the problem of the shaving cream commercial.


He didn't get the job.
He feels very low.
RUGS
This ad gives him an idea.
He buys the shaving cream.
What a happy shave!
He lands the job.
Everyone in the office admires him.
He dances with pretty secretary.
Look -- he's falling in love...
SMOOTHIE
...with his new shaving cream.
SMOOTHIE
Close-up of shaving cream in a cloud of lather.
SMOOTHIE
Close-up of actual package for product remembrance.

Creating a character who must do two things at once

Our problem here is to create the leading character in this script for a TV commercial for the Ace Secretarial School. Our hero is a busy executive who is at his wit's end because of the inefficiency of his secretaries. He tries one after another and becomes more and more frustrated and angry. Then he phones the Ace Secretarial School and the very first girl they send him is perfect.

Our leading character, besides being a hard-to-please "boss" type, must be able to do two things. He must be capable of showing a considerable range of strong feeling – and also of performing a lot of dramatic action.



First try: He's a boss all right, but what a mean one! A mean guy isn't really the type called for by the commercial and, besides, this breaks the first principle we discussed in the introduction to this section on creating characters — they should not be unpleasant.

Second try: This is better. He is still tough but not an ogre. However, notice how small the body is now. He won't be able to do much effective jumping around with such a small body.

Third try: This concept satisfies both requirements. The body is large enough to express lively action. The head is also large enough to display the facial expressions we need. He can look stern as well as just ugly mad, and in the end he can look contented and happy.

The body of this figure is much too small and square to perform these lively actions effectively, as required by the story. He's a Humpty-Dumpty rather than a man.

Here the body is more curved and flowing and a little larger. It lends itself to exciting gestures. In this compromise of the relative sizes of head and body we are able to show a variety of facial expressions and violent action.

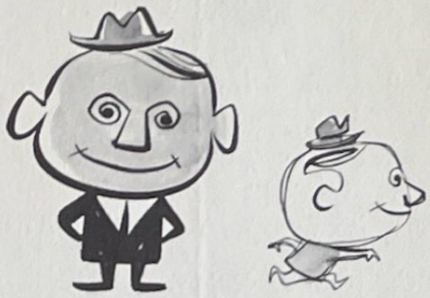
This secretary puts him in a rage.
The second one makes him pace the floor.
A third one makes him tear his hair.
The fourth one he fires immediately.
Whoops -- an idea!
He phones the Ace Secretarial School.
Oh, the bliss of having the perfect secretary!
Our tough boss is a happy man -- thanks to the Ace Secretarial School.

Our busy executive fits into the storyboard perfectly — he expresses his emotions clearly and his actions are strong and effective.

Creating a character who is active

This storyboard tells the sad tale of the commuter whose watch was always wrong. Sometimes he would think he had plenty of time to walk to the station – and just miss the train. Other times he would run like mad and get there so early he would have to sit and wait. Finally, he bought the right watch and his troubles were over.

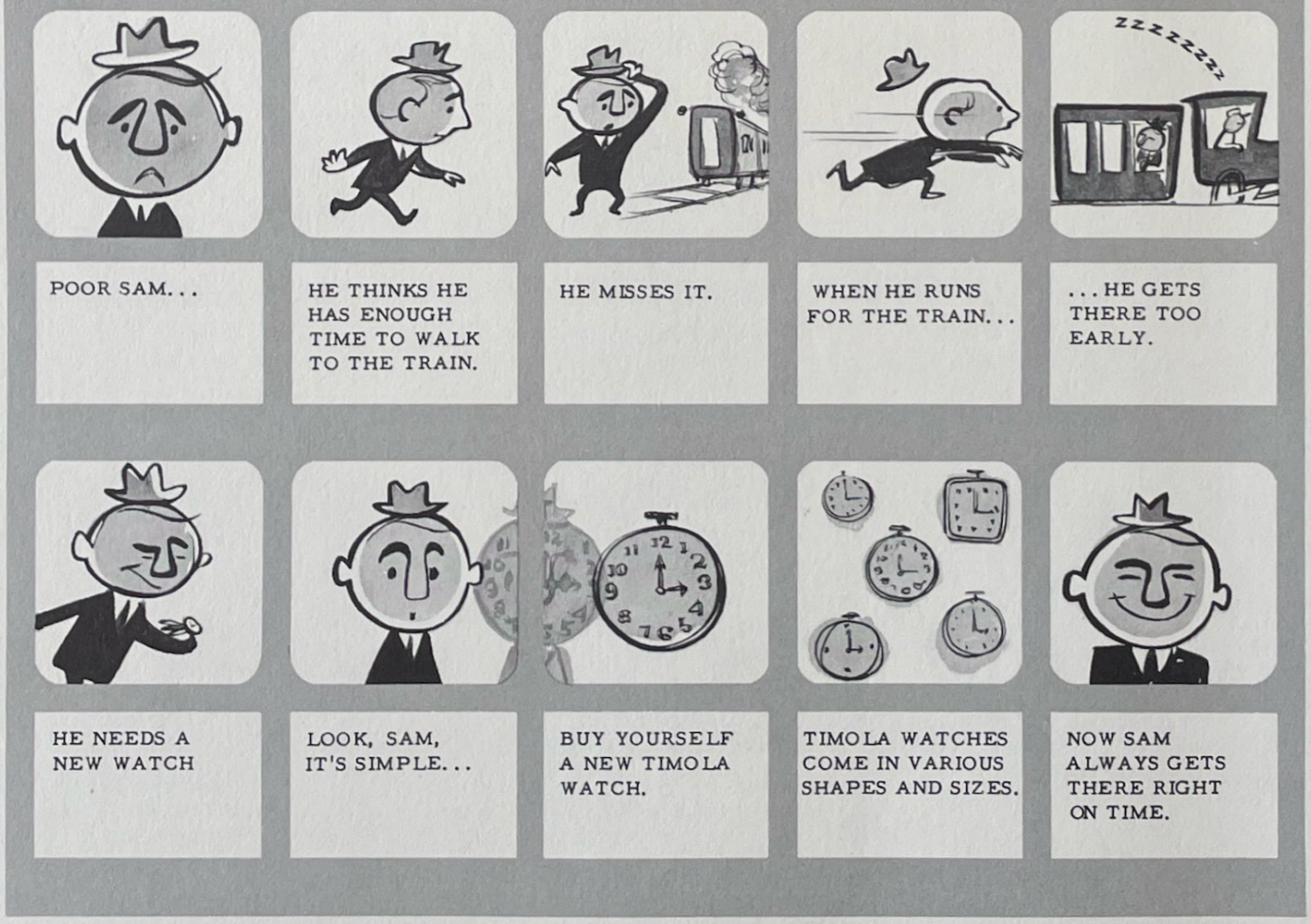
In designing this character, we must consider that he has to do a lot of walking and running. We must also allow for a series of limited truck-ins and close-ups that can show his facial expressions.



First try: The face is good — it's large and likable — but the small body won't be able to walk or run effectively because the legs are too short.

Second try: This long-legged figure can surely run for the train, but his face is too small to show much expression. Besides, timing would not permit the long truck-ins necessary for the close-ups.

Third try: This is our happy medium — it combines the good features of the first two attempts. The body is big enough for a lot of action. The face is big enough to show emotion even in medium shots. Also note that the face has been drawn the right shape, so that we can have a match-dissolve from the head to the watch (shown below in the seventh and eighth panels of the storyboard).


POOR SAM...
HE THINKS HE HAS ENOUGH TIME TO WALK TO THE TRAIN.
HE MISSES IT.
WHEN HE RUNS FOR THE TRAIN...
...HE GETS THERE TOO EARLY.
zzzzzzzz
HE NEEDS A NEW WATCH
LOOK, SAM, IT'S SIMPLE...
BUY YOURSELF A NEW TIMOLA WATCH.
TIMOLA WATCHES COME IN VARIOUS SHAPES AND SIZES.
NOW SAM ALWAYS GETS THERE RIGHT ON TIME.

Our happy-medium type can give us both the action and the facial expressions required in this storyboard.

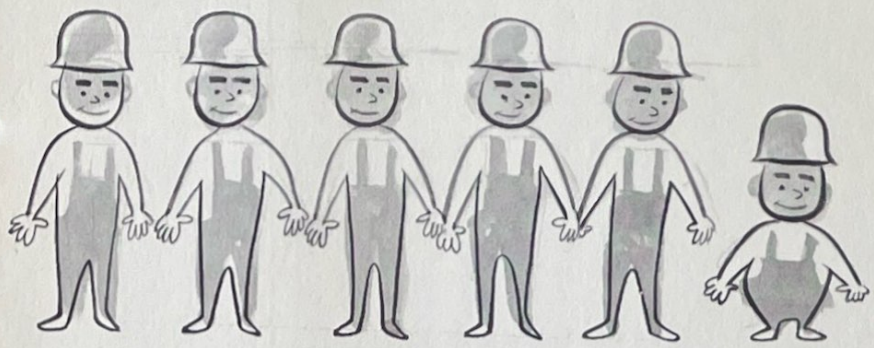
Creating a group of characters

Here we go to work on a commercial for a brewery. We want to show a group of construction workers hearing the quitting whistle and rushing to the nearest tavern for a refreshing glass of the sponsor's beer. The action is fast and it is all in long shots.

The artist's first reaction may be that this is really a tough assignment because he has to design not one but many characters. But he would be well advised to think over the story before he starts to work. Its emphasis is not on individuals but on action, and it says, in effect, that men, as a group, like to drink beer.

Wrong

The artist has wasted his time. The characters are all fine, and he has worked hard to create individual personalities. But no one will appreciate them as individuals when they are seen in the rapid action and the long shots called for by the story. What is wanted is a group. A group should function as a unit, and we should not detract from the over-all action and idea by making every member of the group a "character actor."

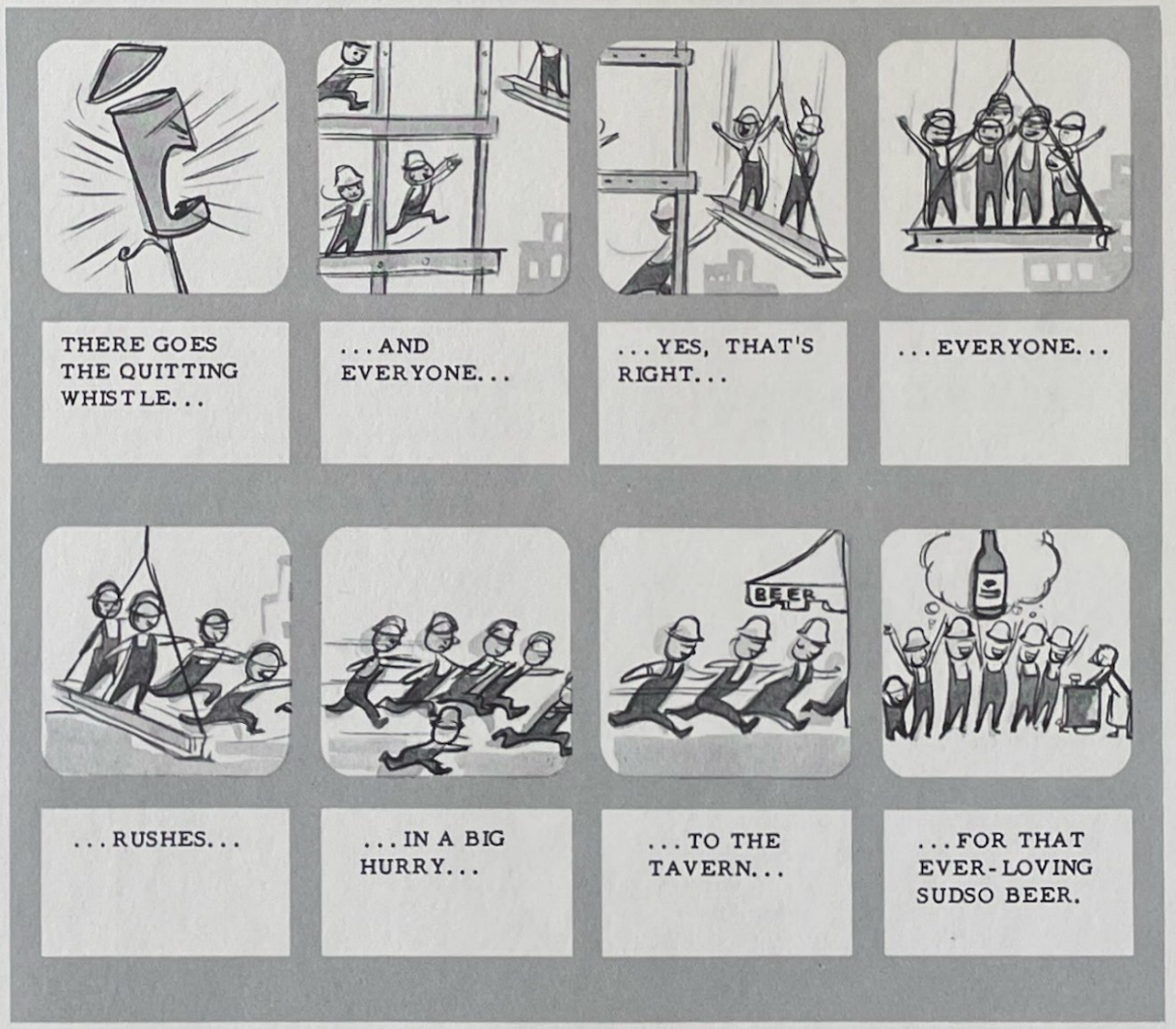


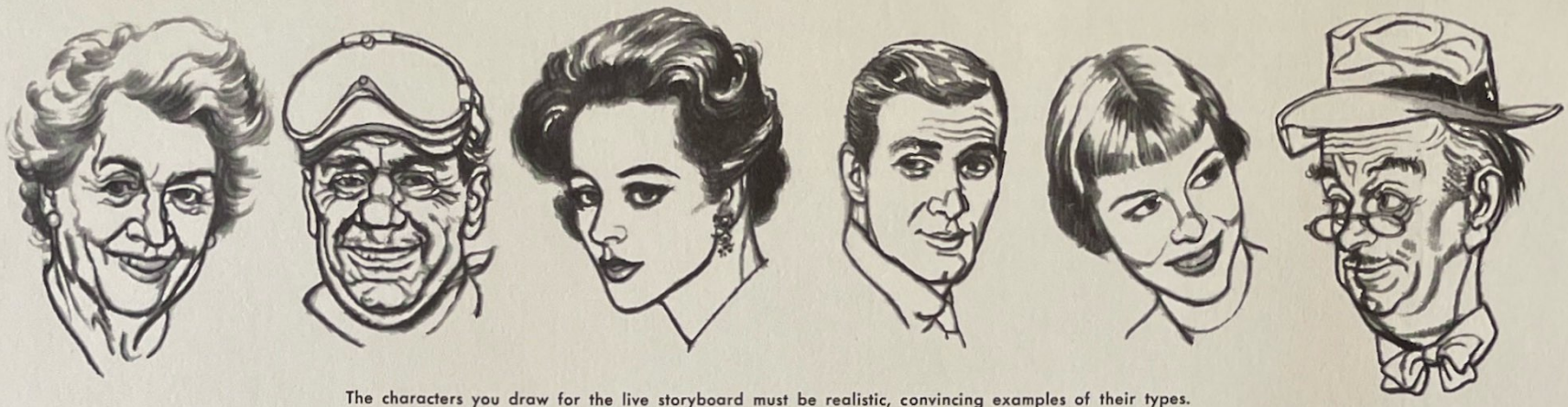
Right

In these characters no attempt is made to display individuality. They act as a unit, which is as it should be, because the principal idea of the commercial is that, as a group, they all enjoy their beer. You can, however, add a light touch of personality and humor to the group by making one of the figures smaller than the others so that he will have to scramble to keep up with them as they rush to the tavern.

Group action is important here — and characterizing the individuals would only confuse it.

This storyboard shows that a group can tell a story as simply and effectively as an individual character.





The characters you draw for the live storyboard must be realistic, convincing examples of their types.

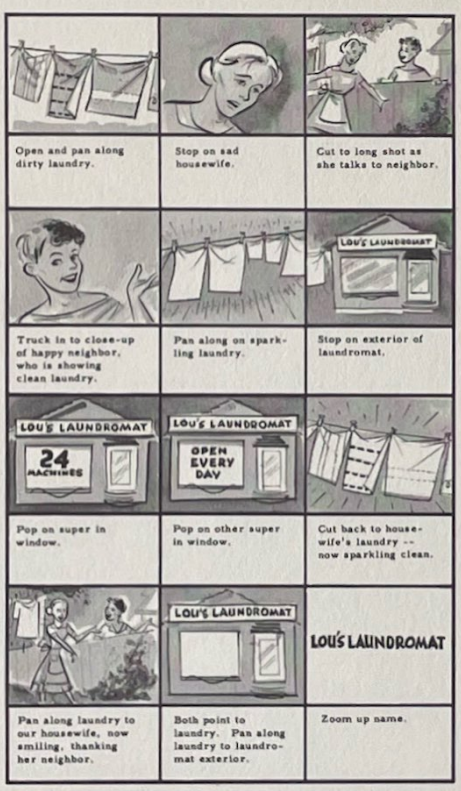
Casting live characters

Up to now we have been "casting" animated characters. But there are times when live action is preferable. Live action may not be as entertaining as animation, but the sight of real human beings in a selling demonstration has more believability and carries more conviction.

Live action can be filmed with real actors in a studio, as in the movies. In cases where this is too expensive or complicated, a series of still photographs is used. This is still called "live action" even though the people are not moving, because the photographs depict human beings – not cartoon characters.

Whether the final production will be filmed as a short movie or created from photographs, the storyboard rendition of it should be done in a realistic, illustrative manner. Unusual art techniques or styles should not be used – the people you draw should look as much as possible like the human beings they are to represent.

If the script calls for an elderly doctor at the bedside of a small boy, the drawing should show a typical elderly doctor. The child he is visiting should look like the little boy next door. A middle-aged housewife should look like a middle-aged housewife – a glamour girl should be a glamour girl – a teenager should be a teenager – a business man should look like a business man – a cowboy like a cowboy – a statesman like a statesman – and Grandma should look like Grandma. The possibilities for characters are endless. But the main idea is to make them look real and true to type.


Open and pan along dirty laundry.
Stop on sad housewife.
Cut to long shot as she talks to neighbor.
Truck in to close-up of happy neighbor, who is showing clean laundry.
Pan along on sparkling laundry.
LOU'S LAUNDROMAT
Stop on exterior of laundromat.
LOU'S LAUNDROMAT
24 MACHINES
LOU'S LAUNDROMAT
OPEN EVERY DAY
Pop on super in window.
Pop on other super in window.
Cut back to housewife's laundry -- now sparkling clean.
LOU'S LAUNDROMAT
LOU'S LAUNDROMAT
Pan along laundry to our housewife, now smiling, thanking her neighbor.
Both point to laundry. Pan along laundry to laundromat exterior.
Zoom up name.

The viewer identifies himself with what he sees

Let's take this storyboard for a laundromat commercial that we made earlier in the lesson and portray the types we believe would be most suitable for the roles. Our cast consists of two women, talking about their laundry problem. This is a good time to remember what we said earlier about the element of self-identification. If the viewer can see something of himself in the TV character, he will be much more inclined to respond to the commercial.

Wrong

This beautiful girl is exciting to look at, but the impression of glamour that she creates is out of place in a commercial about washing clothes. Taking care of laundry is a routine chore of everyday life and we want to be realistic in our approach. The average housewife who will watch this program will not only be unable to identify herself with this glamour girl but she may resent her.

Wrong

This face is much too plain. No housewife would want to identify herself with this woman, especially if she did look a little like her. Every woman, no matter how much of a "plain Jane" she is, still has dreams. And all of us, men as well as women, think we are a little better looking than we are. Always try to choose a character with whom it is both possible and pleasant to identify oneself.

Right

Here is our happy medium. These women are not too pretty — not too plain — not too young — not too old. They are pleasant, believable, nice people — very much like the countless women who watch TV.

The right type for the beauty shop commercial

Now let's decide what types of models we want to recommend through our drawings for the live-action photographs in the beauty shop commercial. Here, the casting problem is slightly different from that of the laundromat storyboard. The beauty shop is selling glamour. The ladies in the commercial should look the way the viewer would like to look. And they should also look the way she thinks she might look if she goes to the beauty shop. So be careful not to go overboard – you can't kid people too much. Even though most of us think we're a little better looking than we really are, very few of us believe in miracles. Don't make the face so beautiful that the viewer will feel only too keenly that no facial in the world is going to do that for her. And don't make the hairdos so elaborate that they wouldn't be practical.

Since the biggest business in a beauty shop is working with hair, it is important to emphasize the hair in this commercial. In choosing hair colors, there are several things to consider. Although black hair makes a very nice contrast to a pretty face, it is not a common shade. Blondes are also in the minority. Our best approach to reach most women is, as usual, the happy compromise. Keep the hair color somewhere between blonde and brunette, as in the last example. Render the face with a minimum of detail and tone.

Right

Don't be too "arty" in creating the poses in your storyboard. Pose the heads as attractively as possible, but in a natural, lifelike manner. Remember that they will eventually be photographed with live models.

Wrong

A contrived, unusual view of a woman's head or a long white throat won't sell a hairdo.

Casting a specific character

We have considered the problem of casting broad, general types such as the housewife or the average woman. Now let's see how a more specific character is developed – a chef. Our commercial here is for a popular salad dressing, and our character is going to demonstrate the many uses of the product. It may take several tries before we arrive at the character who will do the job for us.

First try: This is our first try — a very nice-looking chap, but much too fat. He might create the illusion that the client's product is fattening.

Second try: We go to the opposite extreme. This chap is too thin — he is hardly the type we'd expect to find presiding over a kitchen.

Third try: This fellow is just right. He looks like a typical French chef — the popular symbol of good cooking. He is also more believable as an authority on good food.

Details in characters

All characters designed for television animation should be reduced to simple, basic elements. Because of the time element and the motion, the whole concept differs from that of art for the printed page. In print, the viewer may study the figures and illustrations as long as he pleases. In television, the time for viewing a character is limited to the number of seconds he is on the screen. The more detail in a figure designed for television, the more disconcerting this detail is when the figure is in motion. We are after an impression here rather than detail – and an impression calls for simplicity.

To make all of this clear, let's study a character, first as drawn for the printed page and then for television.

Your insurance agent is as
close as the nearest telephone.
All claims settled promptly!
Accident — illness — retirement —
when any of these occur, you
and your family are protected
when you are adequately insured
through our many services. For
over a hundred years The WEPCO
Agency has been the "friend in
need" to thousands. Call us before
you get in trouble. Our field
managers are but an arm's length
away. Phone — or drop us
a postcard — and friendly,
helpful service is yours!
The WEPCO INSURANCE AGENCY
Milwaukee, Indiana

The lively figure here, an insurance salesman, has just jumped out of a magazine advertisement in order to make an appearance on television. This character, used by an insurance company for many years in its published advertisements, has had a very good response, and the company wants to incorporate him in an animated commercial. Before he can make a successful television cartoon, however, he will have to be revised considerably. Let's study the revisions one by one.

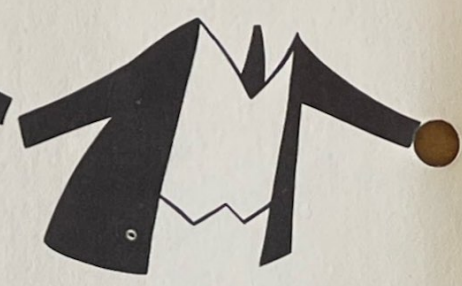
Head

This is the head of the figure in the advertisement. For television we reduce it to its simplest shape — an oval. We add the features, enlarging the eyes and nose, and leave out all wrinkles and tone. We enlarge the ears and simplify the hair.

Torso and arms

Here is the original interpretation for the advertisement.

We simplify the body and arms, eliminate the shirt cuffs.



Simplifying further, we take out the buttons and put in the tie.

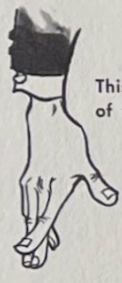
Legs

Here are the legs of the original salesman.

Here is a simplified version.

And this is the ultimate in simplification.

Hands

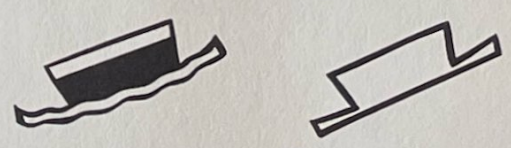


This is the original version of the hand.

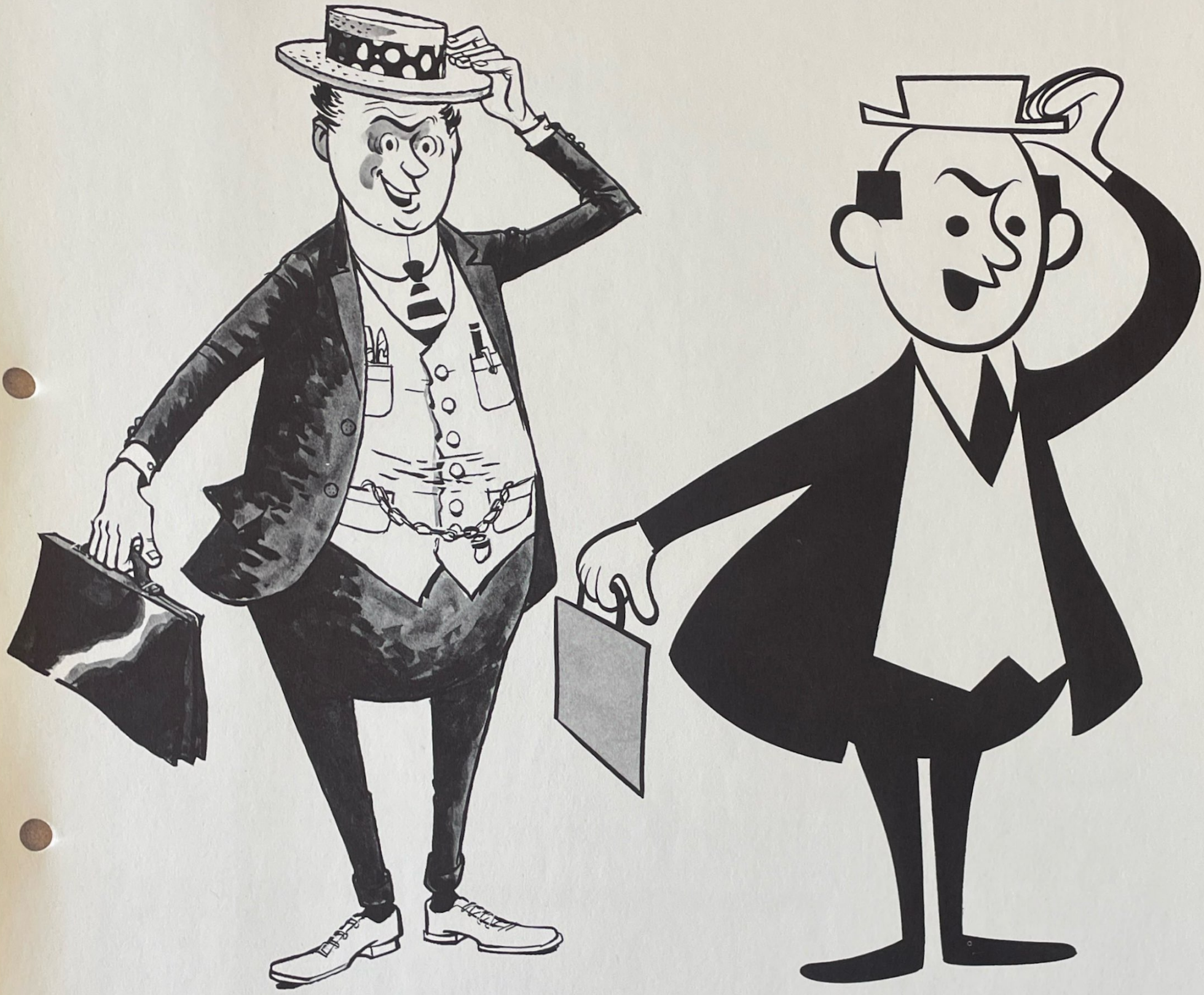
Here is the television version of the hand.

Hat

Here is the hat in the ad.



Here are two simplified versions.



Now we put all of the parts of our television character together and place him next to our original character so we can study the changes we have made. We have enlarged the head, nose and ears. We have taken off the buttons and the shirt cuffs. We have quieted the necktie and the pattern on the hat. We have simplified the legs and shoes into one unit. There are other changes, too. Compare our TV salesman with the salesman of the printed ad and you will see how much more he is now suited to the motion of television art. When creating any television character, it helps to think in terms of a billboard poster — where the elements and figures are so simple that the message is communicated at a glance. The advertisement on the billboard can be understood easily as you drive rapidly by it — and your television character should be understood just as easily.

KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Figure detail and action

How much detail does a figure need in various degrees of action? The "closed eyes" test will help you answer this question. First, look at a person standing still and count up to ten. Now close your eyes and see how much you remember of what you have just seen. You will probably remember quite a lot about the clothing the person is wearing, as well as other outstanding details.

Now, count up to ten again as you watch a person walking. Concentrate on the action rather than on the individual. Close your eyes and see how much you remember. It will be considerably less.

Count up to ten again, at the same speed, while you watch a person running. Again, concentrate on the action. Close your eyes and you will find that you recall very few details, if any. The faster the motion you show in your pictures the less detail you need — and the more you should be concerned with creating the over-all impression of the motion.

Wrong

Let's look at this figure of an Indian pictured as he does a war dance back and forth across the screen. You would think that the drawing is just about as simple as it can be — but it's not. The details and the feathers are unnecessary — as they will be lost in the rapid motion of the dance. The number of bracelets is confusing rather than impressive. The belt and busy moccasins would also be wasted in motion.

Right

Here is the Indian, simplified. The bonnet is only an outline — and so is the tomahawk. We've removed some of the war paint and retained only one bracelet. But the essentials are there — he's still an Indian doing a war dance. Because of the simplicity of the figure the impression of motion has been heightened, even in the single drawing, and will be still more effective in animation.

A word about timing

We have seen that a figure in rapid motion should have little detail. If the action is fast, the picture won't be held on the screen long enough for the viewer to appreciate the detail — in fact, it will only confuse the action.

The opposite is just as true. If a picture is going to be held on the screen a long time, it can have a lot of detail. The viewer will have plenty of time to notice the detail as he listens to the narration. In either case, the amount of detail is determined by the length of time the picture will be held on the screen. This short commercial for a diner illustrates these points.

WHETHER YOU WANT A FULL SIX-COURSE MEAL, WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS OR...
...A FAST SANDWICH...
JOIN ALL THESE HAPPY PEOPLE WHO COME TO JOE'S DINER.
JOE'S
DINER
HERE YOU WILL FIND THE BEST FOOD IN TOWN, THE QUICKEST SERVICE, THE MOST CONVENIENT LOCATION, AND IT IS OPEN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY.

There is more detail here because the scene is held on screen long enough for the viewer to notice all the food on the waiter's loaded trays.

This sandwich moves fast and there is very little narration. Consequently, there is very little detail.

We need enough time here to look at all the happy people going to Joe's Diner. A medium amount of narration and detail is indicated.

This final frame will be held on screen a longer time, so that the name of the diner will stick in the viewer's memory. For this same reason the picture is drawn with a little more detail but with the principal emphasis on the sign, while the rest of the picture is secondary in tone.

Always remember our rule "Keep it simple"

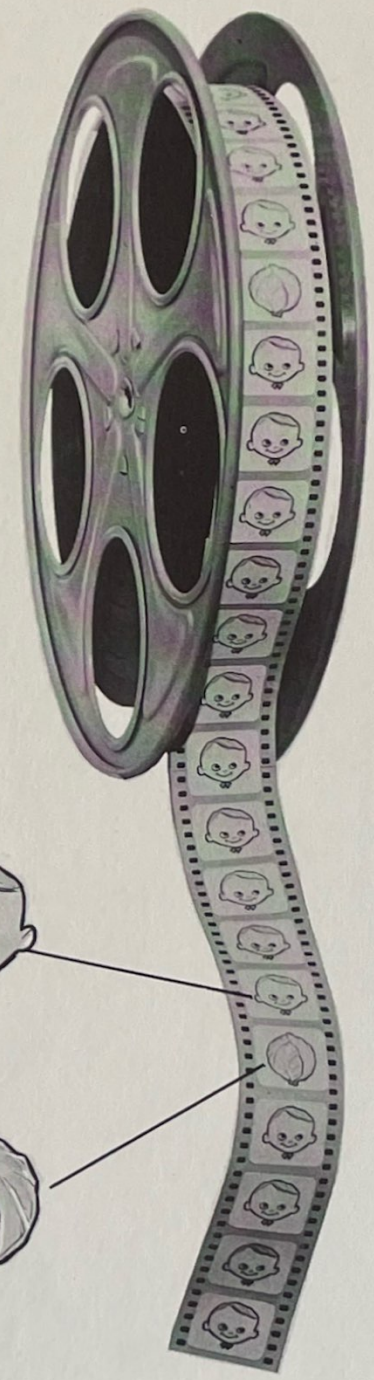
There are good reasons for this all-important rule. Each element of detail you incorporate in a figure is an additional element to be concerned with in animation. Every time a unit moves, the details within that unit must move also. That means that the animation of a figure with many details will be very complicated and expensive. Let's see why.

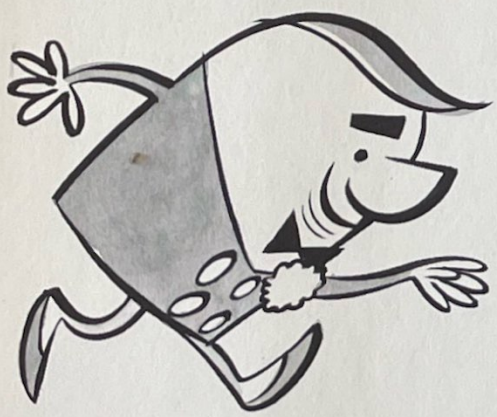
In TV lingo, when a man takes two complete steps in a walking motion, it is called a cycle. A cycle might also be the lifting of a cup of coffee, taking a sip and putting the cup down. Or it might be the complete action of taking a bite of a candy bar. But in the case we shall examine here the cycle consists of completing two full steps of a walk. This single cycle of the walk in full animation will require twenty-four separate drawings. This means that the animator will have to draw all the details in the figure twenty-four times and that's a very good reason for keeping details to a minimum for one single cycle of the walk.

Wrong

Right

We eliminate the nonessentials. And, remember, we are not only saving work and money. We are strengthening the impact of the figure by simplifying it. Excess detail doesn't help to communicate the personality of a character — instead, it detracts from that communication.





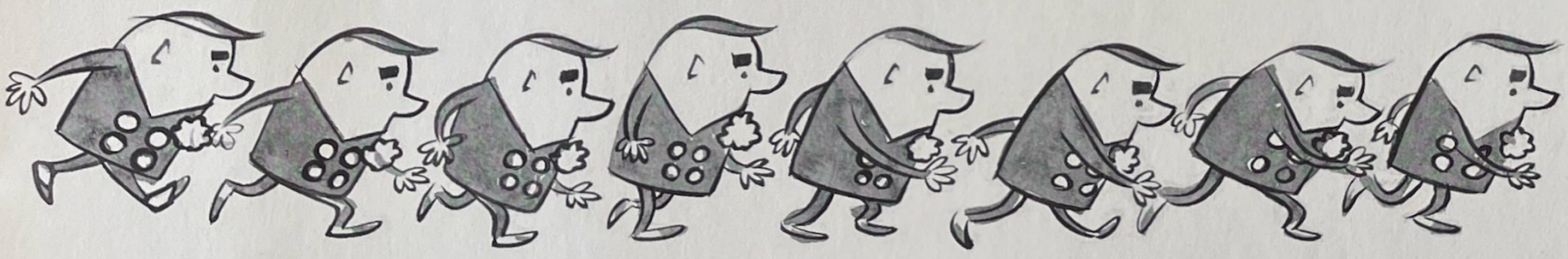
Wrong

Right

Study this figure and break it down into its three basic units — head, torso, and legs. Note how simple each unit is. Then observe the details in the figure on the left — the flower in the buttonhole, the necktie, the buttons on the coat, the spats on the shoes. They will all have to move as the figure walks. We have omitted most of these details in the figure on the right.

A good reason for simplifying characters was demonstrated in the "closed eyes" test on the previous page. To understand more clearly how few details you actually see when objects are in motion, look at this film of the head of a small boy.

As an actual and dramatic experiment, at half-second intervals, every twelfth drawing in this film was replaced by a picture of a head of cabbage — just the same size as the boy's head. When the film was projected in final form the cabbage had to be called to the attention of the audience. No one had noticed the cabbage, even though it was repeated forty-three times!



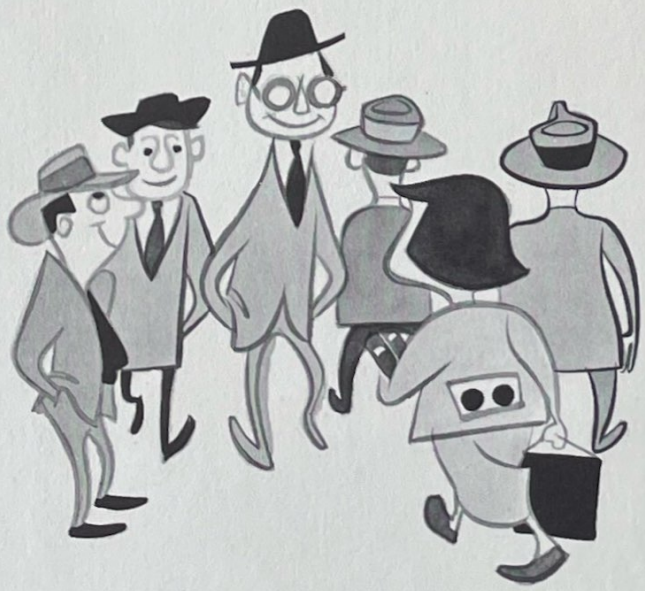
These eight drawings are only one-third of what is needed for one cycle of animation, so that the figure may complete two steps.

Detail and value in secondary characters

We have seen that detail in our characters should be kept to a minimum. This rule applies with double force to secondary characters. They need even less detail. We can make the necessary detail in them still less important by reducing the value of these secondary characters. The lighter value helps to keep them in the background, where they belong — and makes the main characters stand out better.

Our point about value has a basis in real life. In order to prove this, let's take a walk down a crowded street. Our eye wanders around the scene — it doesn't focus on anyone in particular.

Now let's concentrate on the tall figure in this photograph, assuming this figure holds some special interest for us. This retouched photograph gives an idea of the impression we would get in real life.



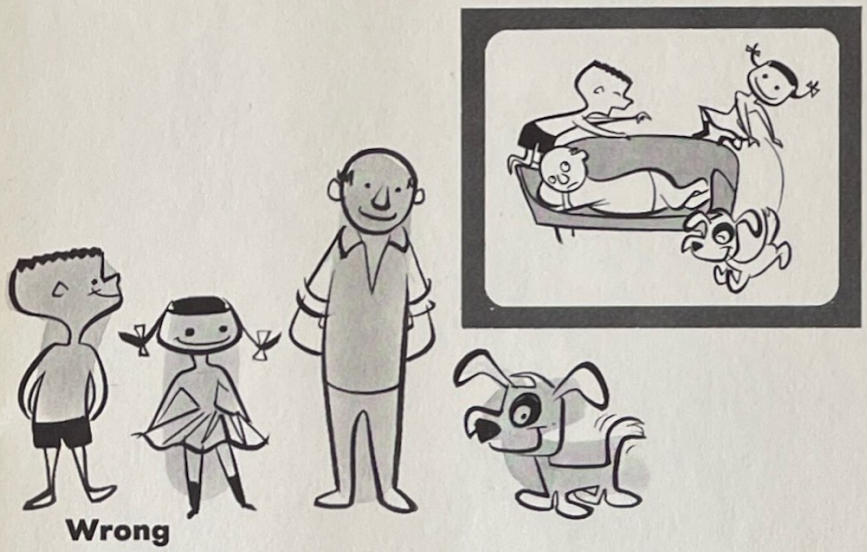
Let's apply this experience to our rendering of television characters. As in the unretouched photograph, our gaze wanders over the entire picture. All the characters are equally important — no individual stands out.

And this is how our drawing would look if we made the value of the secondary characters lighter. The viewer's attention would naturally focus on one principal figure — our star. This is an approach we often use in drawing for television.

The star, the supporting players, the extras

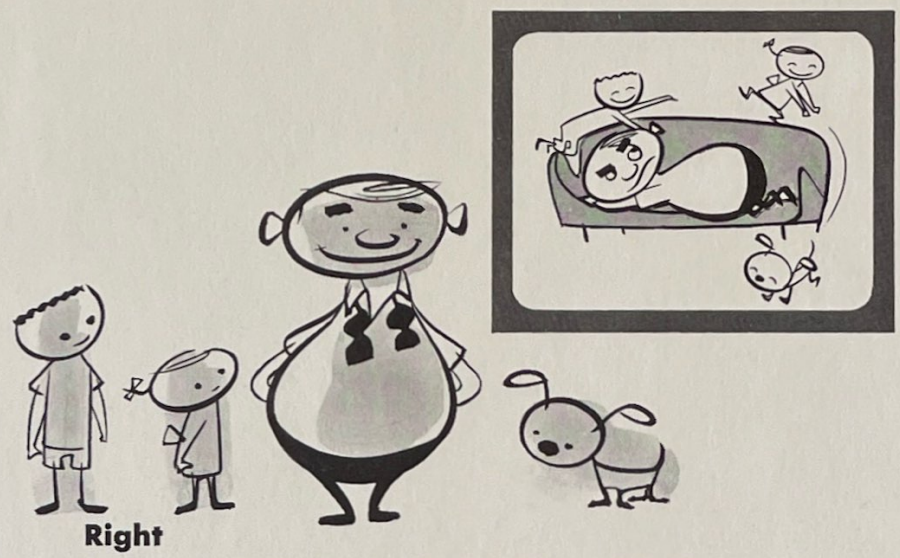
In a television film, just as in a movie, you often have a complete cast of characters. The principal figure is the star, the secondary figures are the supporting players, and the extras are just extras. On this and the following page we show you different ways you can interpret these characters so their importance in the cast is visually clear.

Let's start by looking at a simple story. The father, who is the star, is trying to take a nap. The children, who are the supporting players, rush madly around. The puppy, who is the extra, follows them. How can we interpret each character to make him hold his place in the cast?



Wrong

Here is one interpretation of the characters. There are several things wrong here. The most important is that the father, as the star, isn't outstanding enough. The children have too much character for supporting players and so detract from the star. The puppy is very cute. In fact, he is much too cute — he is a scene stealer. It is the star, not the puppy, who should command the viewer's attention.



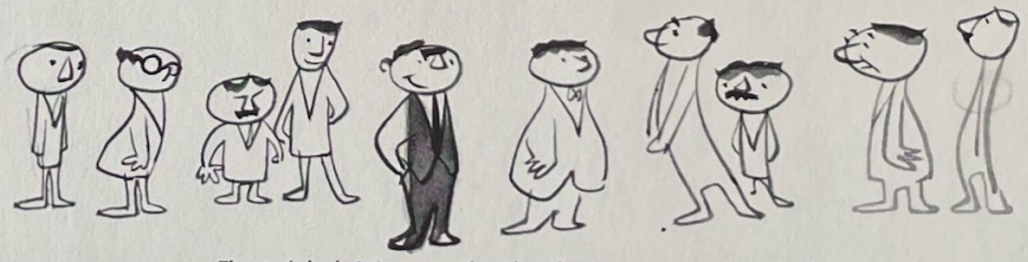
Right

In this interpretation the characterization of the father establishes him as the star. The simple design of the children and dog holds them to their roles of supporting players and extra. The main reason why it is so important that the star be outstanding in a television commercial is that the time for the action is so limited. There is no time to waste on extras — we must tell our story as quickly and as clearly as possible.

How to make the star outstanding

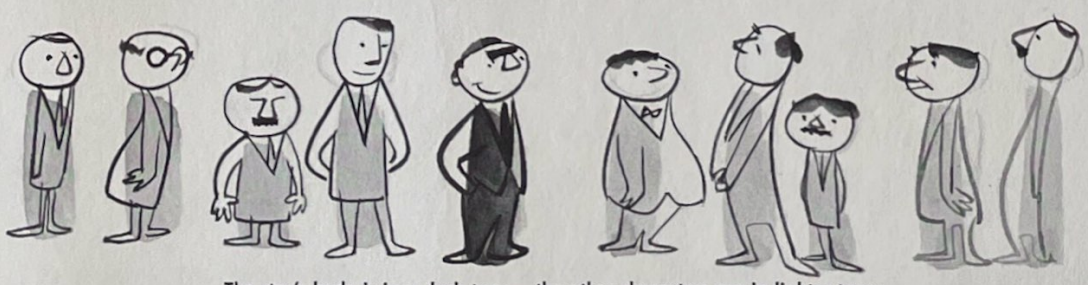
We have just considered one way a character can be treated to make him outstanding in a group. Here we look at some examples of rendering that will also help to "project" the star visually.

The star has a heavy outline — the other characters have lighter outlines.



The star's body is in tone — the other characters are merely outlined.

The star's body is a pattern — the other characters are outlined.

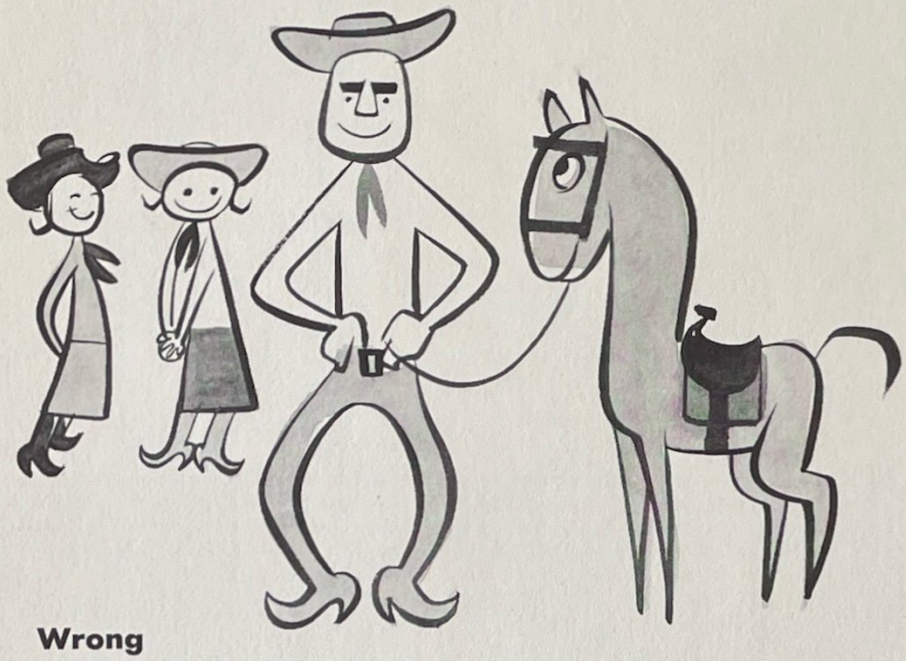


The star's body is in a dark tone — the other characters are in lighter tones.

Emphasizing the star by the use of tone

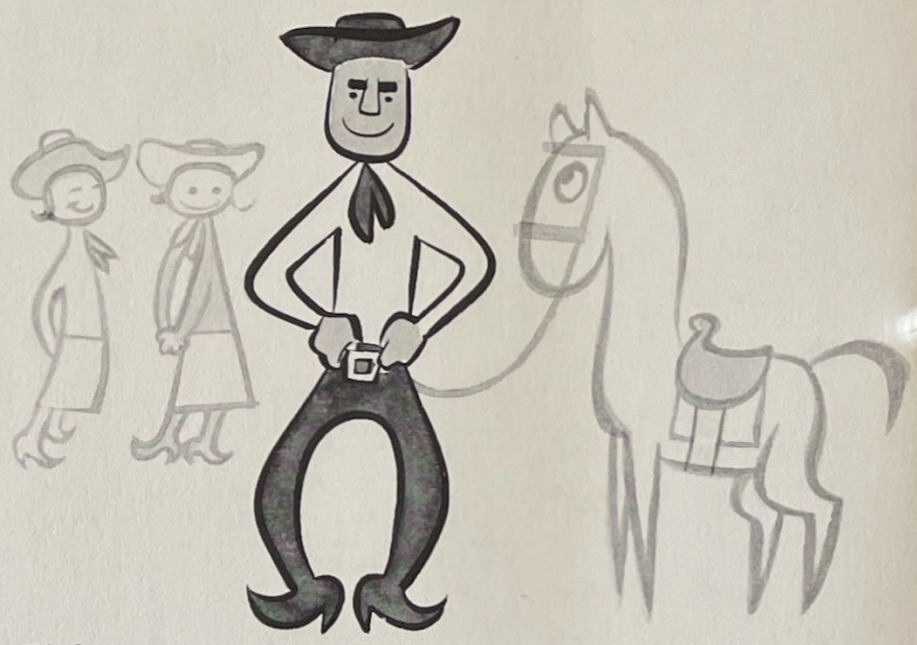
Our problem here is to create the characters for a commercial for Scram deodorant. The scene is western. A cowboy has a grave problem of unpopularity, due to that old demon "B.O." He loses his friends – even his horse forsakes him. It is only after he hears some girls talking about him that he realizes what is the matter. He finds the happy solution in a jar of Scram.

In drawing our characters we want to make perfectly clear who plays the leading role and who is in the supporting cast. We do this simply and directly by the control of tone.



Wrong

No one figure stands out here. The girls, even the horse, should be secondary. They are not, so our attention is not on the star but is divided among all the characters.



Right

Now our cowboy is the star. While the details of the other figures remain, they are kept light in tone. In this rendering the cowboy stands out because of the deeper tones. The other characters are secondary and our attention automatically focuses on our hero.

SLIM SAM HAD MANY FRIENDS...
...UNTIL ONE DAY THEY ALL LEFT HIM --
--EVEN HIS HORSE.
SAM COULDN'T FIGURE IT OUT...
...UNTIL HE OVER-HEARD THE GIRLS DISCUSSING HIM.
HE BOUGHT SCRAM DEODORANT TO ELIMINATE B.O.
NOW SAM KEEPS HIS MANY FRIENDS, INCLUDING HIS HORSE.
HE ALSO KEEPS A JAR OF SCRAM DEODORANT IN THE BUNKHOUSE.
SCRAM!

Wrong

This interpretation makes all the characters too individual. The man is an individual personality, rather than a symbol of a father. The same is true of the other characters. They all fight for the viewer's attention and draw it away from the star — the package of cereal.

Right

Now the characters are not individuals but they convey the impression of a family unit. They are symbols of the real people they represent. They are subordinated to the package by the simplicity of their over-all design and will not distract attention from the advertiser's message. See how well they work in the storyboard.

The star is not always a person

In some commercials, the star is not a person at all. The star is often the sponsor's product. Here, for example, is the plot of a storyboard for a breakfast cereal. Mother puts a package of Flakies on the breakfast table. The package comes alive and calls the rest of the family to breakfast. They all enjoy Flakies — hold the package up in the air — and say how good it is. In casting the characters, we should remember that the package of Flakies is starred, and not the members of the family, who are really symbols in this case.

FLAKIES
BREAKFAST FOOD
Mother puts the Flakies on the table.
The package comes alive and gives the call to breakfast.
Dad and the kids rush happily to the table.
Dad serves everyone generously.
Mom says, "It's Flakies for us every good morning."
Zoom in for a close-up of the package for product remembrance.

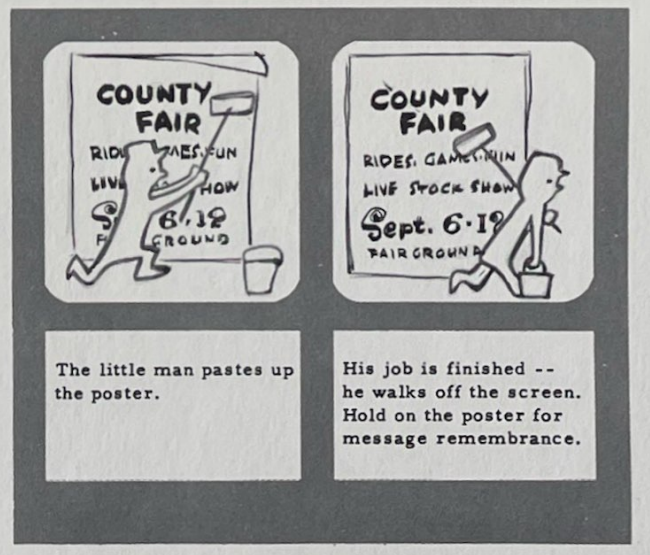
Here is another example of a commercial in which the human element must be kept secondary because something else is really the star of the show. Our problem is to create a storyboard for a ten-second announcement of the coming county fair. The commercial is to show a little man who is putting up a poster that gives all the details about the fair — the date, the attractions, and the place.

Wrong

The hat, the pipe, the mustache — all these give the little man too much personality. The viewer would probably watch him instead of the poster, and that's not what we want if the message is to be gotten across.

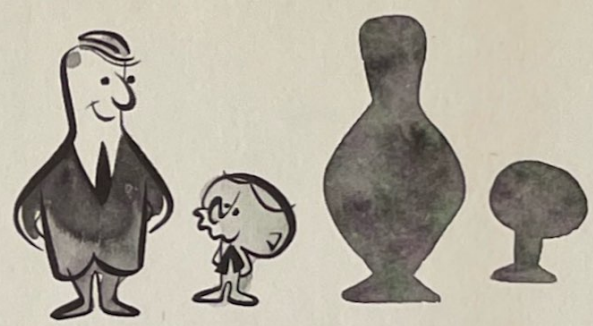
Right

This simply outlined figure keeps the little man in his place. He will act as part of the entire unit and won't draw too much attention to himself. The poster is the star of the show because it delivers the message about the fair. It will now hold the viewer's attention and he may not even be aware that the man walks off when his job is finished.


COUNTY FAIR
COUNTY FAIR
RIDES, GAMES, FUN
LIVE STOCK SHOW
Sept. 6-12
The little man pastes up the poster.
His job is finished -- he walks off the screen. Hold on the poster for message remembrance.

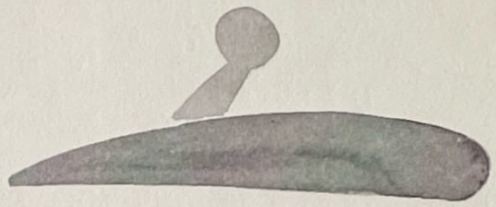
48 How to determine the size of characters and related objects

The larger a figure or an object is, the more attention it commands. This is particularly true when the figure is in motion. It is therefore very important to decide on the right proportions for all characters and their related objects. In making this decision, it is often helpful to translate both figures and objects into abstract shapes, as we demonstrate here.



Above we show you two comic figures — and how they look as abstract shapes.

Now, let's say we have a situation that calls for the figure of a man, who is to be the star. He is riding in an automobile, which should be secondary.



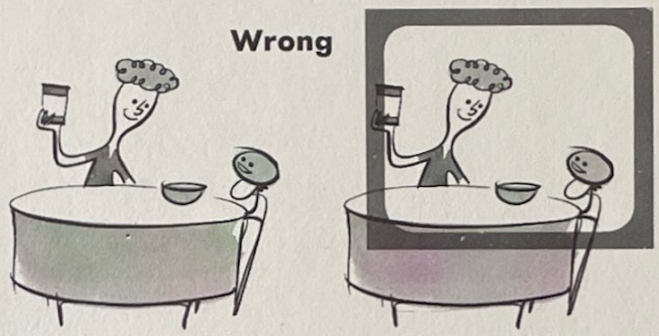
Here we translate the drawing into an abstract. We see immediately that the car is more prominent than the man. Our proportions are wrong.

So we draw another abstract, reducing the car and enlarging the man. There is much more emphasis here on the man.

Now we translate our abstract drawing back into a cartoon. We can see that the proportion is much better for our purpose — the man is the star and the car is secondary.

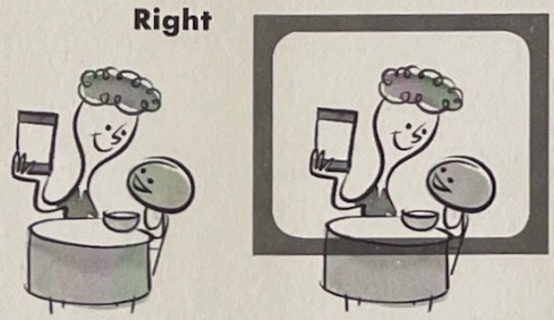
Here is another example of the importance of proportion. The problem is to do a commercial for a baby food called Goodies. It calls for a mother sitting at a table with her small son. Their facial expressions will be important in conveying the sponsor's message.

Wrong



If we used these characters and the table as they are, we would be wrong on several counts. The table is much too large and the heads are so small that they permit very little facial expression. If we tried to show a close-up of both characters at the same time, the package of Goodies would be lost.

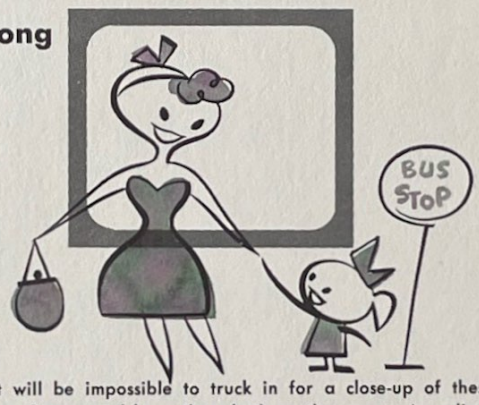
Right



Our problem is solved by reducing the table and enlarging the figures and box. The two figures are now in better proportion — both to each other and to the table. The heads are large enough, so that the faces can show pleasure. The composition of all the elements as a unit is satisfying and we can truck in to get a good close-up.

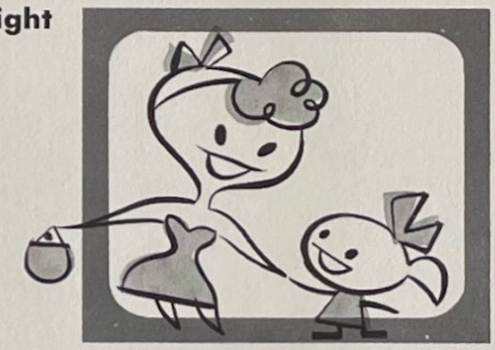
If there is too great a difference in the size of characters there will be a problem in showing them in medium shots and close-ups. Suppose we have two figures — a mother and a very small child — standing at a bus stop. We want to truck in from a long shot to a close-up of both figures.

Wrong



It will be impossible to truck in for a close-up of these two figures and keep them both on the screen. An adjustment must be made in their proportions.

Right



This is better because we have made the figures smaller but kept the heads the same size. Now, when we truck in for a close-up of the heads, both will be on the TV screen.

If we study this picture on a printed page, the extreme difference in the size of the two soldiers is of no consequence. We can take all the time we want to look at the small figure, as well as the big one. However, it's quite another thing when we see these two figures in motion on the television screen.

Now we've reduced these two figures to abstract forms to suggest what would happen on the TV screen with both figures moving. Watching the screen, your eye would automatically stay with the larger figure. You would barely have time to find the smaller figure because it would be so small. When designing for television, keep the principle of the outdoor billboard in mind — the billboard must be readable even when you are driving past it at fifty miles an hour. The same design principle applies in television. The elements must not only be simple, but they must be large enough to be easily visible when in motion.

Story emphasis

You will remember the dairy storyboard we studied earlier in this lesson. Although our story is already well established, we can still sharpen it up by making sure that each element is given just the right emphasis to get the idea across as clearly as possible. There are quite a lot of characters and objects to consider — the milk truck, the driver, the billboard, and the people going into the store. Our problem is to present all of these elements so that they do not fight each other for the viewer's attention, but co-operate in telling the story. Here it is the story itself that we want to emphasize — for it is the story, rather than any individual character, that will sell the product.

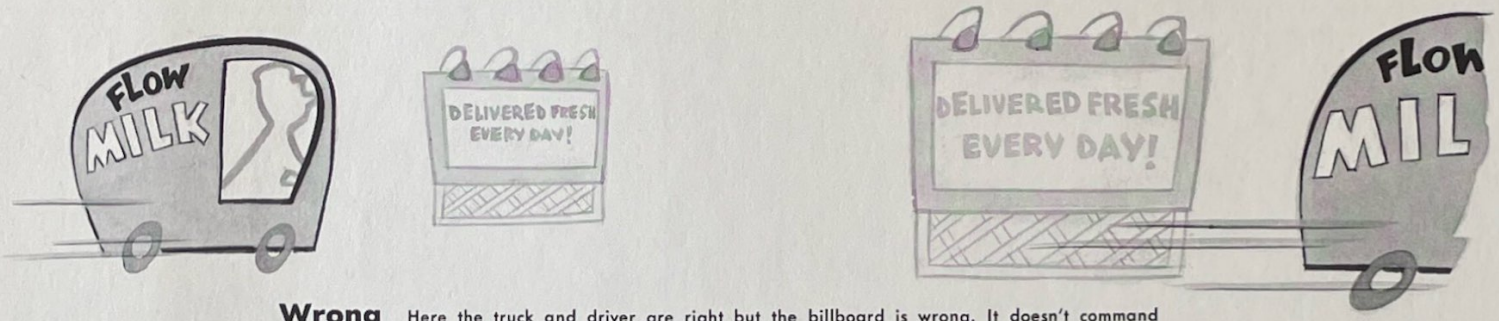
We'll take the milk truck and driver first.

Wrong

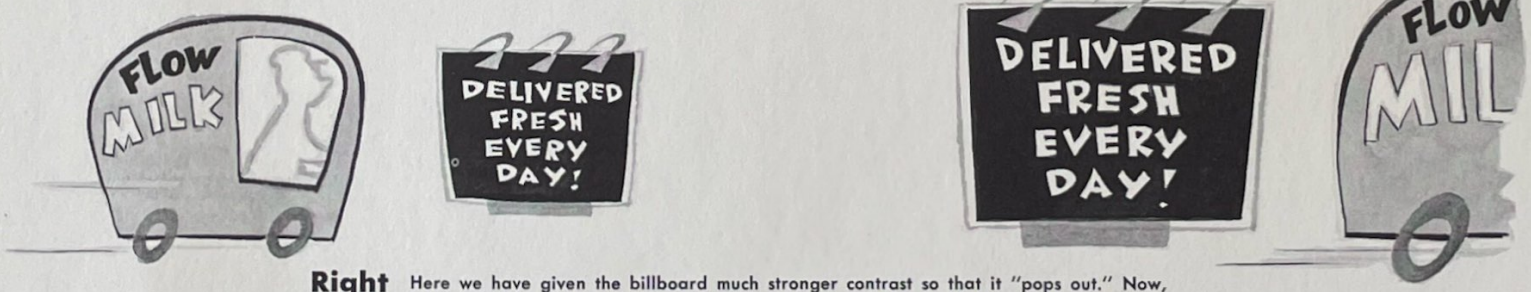
There is too much detail in this truck driver for the minor role he plays in our story. He is, at best, a secondary character — really just a part of the truck.

Right

This simplified truck driver is better. His unexpressive face is simple and direct. The driver and the truck act as one unit and will not detract from the over-all story emphasis.



Wrong Here the truck and driver are right but the billboard is wrong. It doesn't command attention, since it is rendered in almost the same value as the truck. When the truck passes by, the viewer's eye will follow it instead of reading the sign.



Right Here we have given the billboard much stronger contrast so that it "pops out." Now, you may not even notice the truck as it passes the billboard and leaves the scene. The billboard holds your attention and delivers its message clearly.

Wrong

Again, there is too much individual characterization in these figures going into and out of the store. After all, they are secondary characters. They are important in telling the story, but they are not important as individuals.

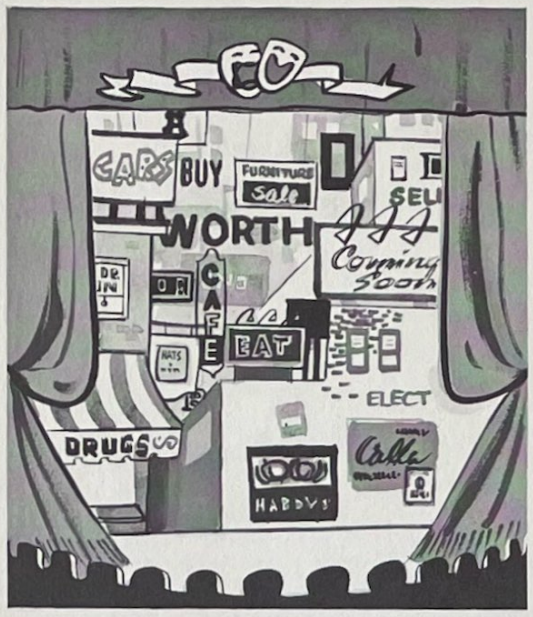
Right

These characters are right for the situation. The group of figures is depicted as just that — a group. They act as a unit and fit into the pattern of the story smoothly. They do not interfere with the emphasis on the milk bottles.

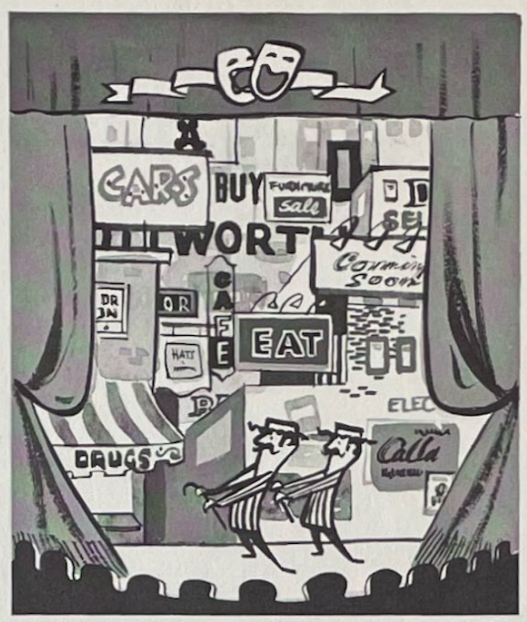
Relating characters to background

Backdrops and stage sets have always been important in show business. The right background can contribute a great deal to the success of a play. It can contribute just as much – in fact, a considerable amount more – to the success of a commercial.

A confused, distracting background can seriously damage the effectiveness of any play. This applies with double force in television. Because of the speed with which the characters move, the background must complement the action – and never interfere.



You may or may not remember the old days of vaudeville when the backdrop was a screaming montage of local advertisements. This is what it looked like.



When the song-and-dance team came on the stage, recognizing them against the confusing backdrop was almost like trying to solve a "Find the Hidden Face" puzzle.

Then good taste took over and the better vaudeville theaters began to present their acts in front of much simpler backdrops that didn't distract the viewers' attention.

We have adopted the simple backdrop concept, with slight variations, in television animation. One variation is that if a figure stays within one area, without panning, some background detail can be incorporated.

But if we draw the same figure going for a walk, and we pan along a background, we show much less detail in the background.

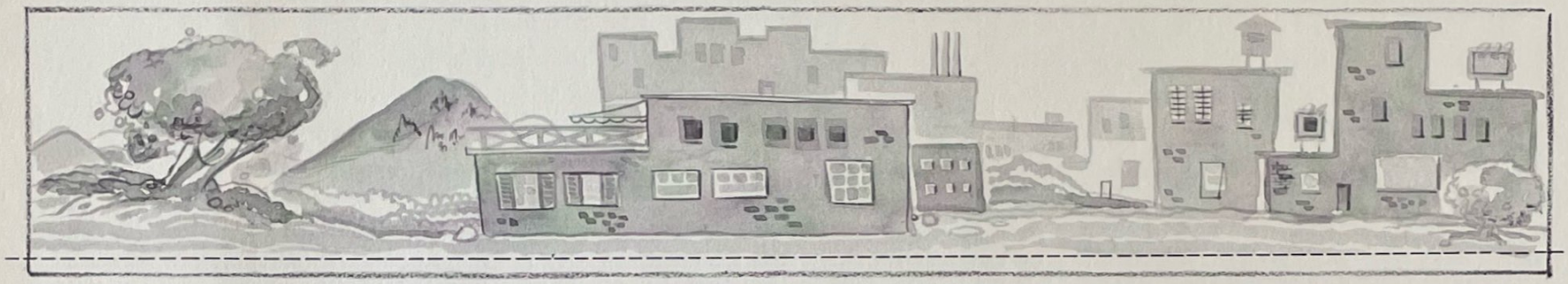
If the figure runs at great speed across a background, our slogan KEEP IT SIMPLE should be enforced in full. The background should be merely one of texture, or the slightest variation of lights and darks.

A practical experiment in motion against a background

In general, all television backgrounds should be very simple. But there are certain times when some detail is desirable. The amount of detail in a background is determined entirely by the speed with which a figure or an object moves across that background. If the figure moves slowly, some detail can be used. If the figure moves at a medium pace, there should be less detail. If the figure moves very fast there should be nothing except simple shapes. If the figure moves at different speeds – first slowly, then fast, then slowly again – the detail in the background should change so that it matches the different speeds.

In order to demonstrate this, let's try a practical experiment in the motion of a unit against a background. Immediately below is a background that is much too detailed. A lot of time and work went into making it – and a lot of wasted effort as well. Let's prove it – trace the car at the upper right, paint it black, and cut it out. Then follow the instructions below.

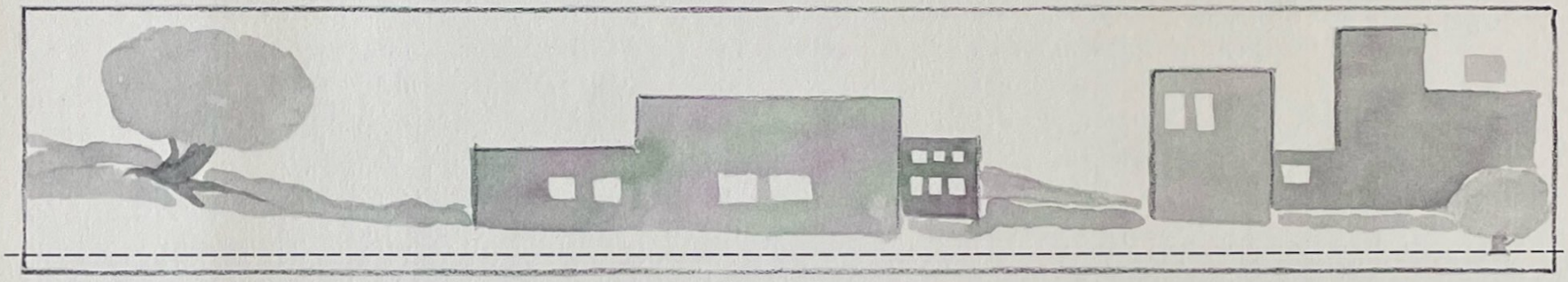
0 1,001 1,002 1,003 1,004 1,005 1,006



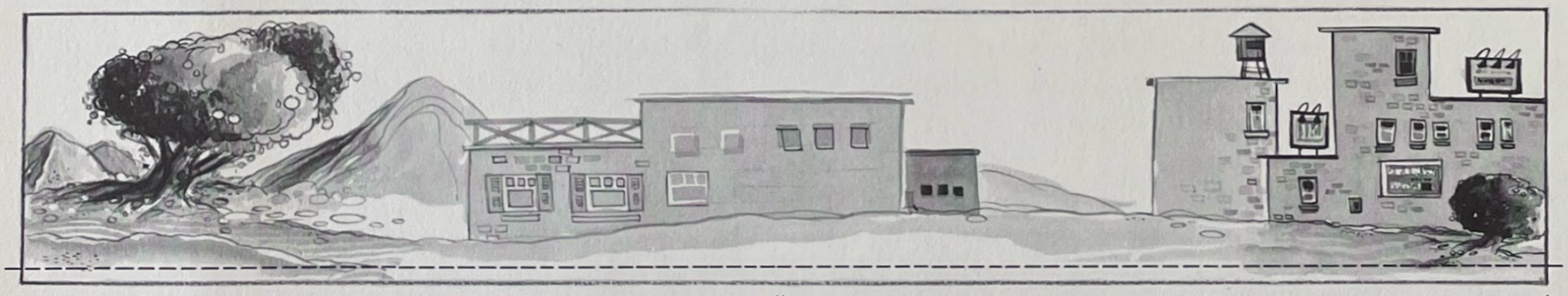
Place your car on this background at 0. Keeping your eye on the car, move it with your index finger from left to right, along the dotted line. As you move the car, count at a moderate speed — 1,001 — 1,002 — 1,003 — 1,004 — 1,005 — 1,006. (It takes about one second to say each of these figures.) At the end of your count the car should have crossed the entire picture. Do you notice how unaware you were of all the detail and hard work that went into the background?

Now take your car again and move it across the same picture twice as fast as before. You will notice even less of the background when the speed is doubled.

0 1,001 1,002 1,003 1,004 1,005 1,006



Here is the same background, but with most of the details left out. We have retained only the big forms and shapes and tones. Now move your car across this simplified background. Count at the same speed as at first and continue to concentrate on the car. You will find that the car stands out much better without the interference of a detailed background. And, of course, there is a lot less work in the execution of this simple, more effective setting than there was in the first one.



There is some detail at first because the car is moving quite slowly.

There is less detail as the car picks up speed.

There is very little detail as the car moves fast.

Finally, there is more detail at the end as the car comes to a halt.

Now we have a problem to solve. The car is to start slowly, pick up speed, go fast, and then stop abruptly. Notice how the background is laid out for this action. Some detail is justified here in certain parts of the setting. Using your own judgment of speed, move the car across this background — just as we have indicated.

And now — good pictures!

This Course was designed to prepare you for this day — the day when you set out alone to discover your own path as an artist.

By now, you should know how to use the tools and techniques of your craft with skill and confidence. We have acquainted you with the various materials and methods most commonly used in the field of commercial art and illustration. In careful criticisms of your assignments, we have pointed out what you have done well. We have noted your weaknesses and shown you how to correct them.

At the same time, through thousands of pictures, diagrams, and analyses, we have taught you the principles of drawing and painting. We have shown you the many different approaches contemporary artists take in arriving at creative pictures for visual communication. We have also shown you what you should do to try to achieve the same form of creative expression. And we have tried to encourage and stimulate in you an inquisitive and creative attitude toward your own art.

With all this background of knowledge you should be at home in the world of creative art. You should be able to decide eventually on the general direction to follow in your own development.

What should you do in the days that lie ahead? There is only one answer — keep drawing and painting and studying. Subscribe to good professional magazines in the art field. Study national publications so you are always aware of new styles and trends in art as they appear—keep up with what others are doing. Visit the art museums and fine arts exhibitions as much as you can — make the acquaintance of other artists in your own and neighboring communities.

Above all, learn to be objective about your work. Try to discover your mistakes so you can correct them before others point them out to you. Apply the principles of criticism as you have studied them in this Course — for only through objective self-criticism can you develop.

The days ahead should be exciting days of self-discovery. We have constantly tried to make one thing clear throughout your Course. There is no <u>one</u> way of making pictures. Each artist must work in his own manner, and he will eventually, through constant experiment, develop his own personal technique and method of making pictures.

However seriously you take your work, learn not to take yourself too seriously. Even for the master artist, there is no final goal. One discovery leads to another — one achievement suggests a possibility still more exciting. Art is a road on which getting to your destination is less important than what you discover — and become — along the way.

Wonderful days of growth, change, and discovery are in store for you. Make the most of them. We promise you that there will never be a dull moment in the years ahead if you embrace this adventure freely — with a sympathetic and inquisitive attitude toward all new art forms and directions.

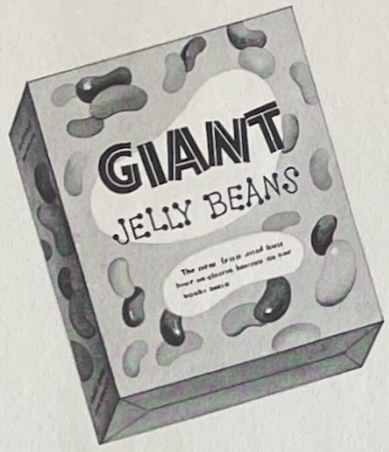
And now — good pictures! We sincerely hope your work with us will eventually bring you rich personal rewards and emotional satisfactions, and that you will become the artist you want to be — with your own full share of success.

Albert Dorne PRESIDENT

Plate 1

Assignment 1

Prepare a storyboard for an animated TV film commercial



	1	2	3
WHAT TO DRAW	Make this a long shot. Kids are cute—heads about same size as body, so expressions are easy to see. Dream balloon is about as big as a bed—indicate it is both kids' dream. Show no furniture or room details except the beds.	Same long shot. Children in extreme action, reaching for jelly bean. Bean in same position as before—but balloon is gone.	Move in a little for this shot. Show kids holding jelly bean about waist high between them. It is proportionately as large as before. Make other jelly beans each a different tone to suggest various flavors. Omit beds.
AUDIO:	BOYS AND GIRLS, IF YOU'VE BEEN DREAMING ABOUT THE BIGGEST JELLY BEANS IN THE WORLD...	...YOU'VE BEEN DREAMING ABOUT "GIANT JELLY BEANS." WAKE UP TO THIS NEW TREAT IN SWEETS!	"GIANT JELLY BEANS" COME IN ALL DIFFERENT FLAVORS.
VIDEO:	Open on two children, a boy and a girl, asleep in twin beds. Dream balloon over heads contains a huge jelly bean.	Children up from their beds as they reach for jelly bean in balloon. Balloon fades out.	Children hold the one huge jelly bean between them. Other beans, equally large, pile up on it.
	4	**5**	**6**
WHAT TO DRAW	Both children are all smiles as they hold beans. Two kids come in from left background, one boy from right. All smile and lick their lips.	Package has covered jelly beans. Be sure to simplify package and enlarge its basic elements to insure product recognition.	Render package as large as possible—an extreme close-up.
AUDIO:	BE THE FIRST IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD TO SHOW THE OTHER BOYS AND GIRLS THIS NEW CANDY DELIGHT!	LOOK FOR THIS PACKAGE AT YOUR FAVORITE CANDY STORE.	REMEMBER TO ALWAYS ASK FOR "GIANT JELLY BEANS" FOR THAT REALLY BIG TREAT.
VIDEO:	Other boys and girls run in. Arms raised in excited gesture toward jelly beans.	Package appears around jelly beans --effect is that boy and girl are holding large package. Other children look on with anticipation.	Figures and background fade out--at same time, zoom up package for close-up. Hold.

Assignment 2

Prepare a storyboard for a live TV film commercial

	1	2	3	4
WHAT TO DRAW	Draw a realistic close-up of man, head-on view, including shoulders. Accentuate the expression of misery as he coughs.	Restyle the label on the bottle shown at the left, retaining its general character but simplifying it for rapid legibility. Even when a product is to be photographed, a clearer, simpler label must sometimes be designed.	Show right hand (and part of arm) holding bottle about one foot in front of medicine chest. Render bottle as before. Indicate other units in chest but without detail.	Draw man from panel 1 in profile. He holds bottle in right hand. Spoon to mouth in left hand. Expression no longer shows misery. Indicate medicine chest in background, right.
AUDIO:	WHEN YOU HAVE A COUGH...	...TAKE "SOOTHING COUGH SYRUP" FOR QUICK RELIEF.	"SOOTHING COUGH SYRUP" IS AN IMPORTANT ITEM IN EVERY MEDICINE CHEST.	ONE SPOONFUL OF "SOOTHING COUGH SYRUP"...
VIDEO:	Open on man's face. Close-up as he coughs.	Cut to close-up of bottle of "Soothing Cough Syrup."	Pull back to reveal bottle is in medicine chest. Hand comes into scene to take bottle from chest.	Continue pull-back to show man taking spoonful of syrup.
	5	**6**	**7**	**8**
WHAT TO DRAW	Render the clock in extreme close-up, so we can see the passing of time easily. Make minute hand heavy, so we notice its changing position in next panel.	Same drawing, with minute hand in different position, as directed below.	Render figure in about same position as in panel 1. His face shows relief as he looks at bottle, held in right hand at shoulder height.	Extreme close-up of bottle in hand. (Same bottle as in panel 2.) Keep label clear and legible.
AUDIO:	...BRINGS YOU RELIEF IN...	...A MATTER OF MINUTES...	SO, FOR FAST RELIEF FROM A COUGH...	...GET "SOOTHING COUGH SYRUP" TODAY!
VIDEO:	Pan right for close-up of clock. Hour hand is on one, minute hand on three, denoting 1:15.	Dissolve minute hand to four, showing passage of five minutes' time to 1:20.	Pan left to show man holding bottle. His face shows relief.	Zoom into close-up of bottle.

Lesson 24 Famous Artists Course
Television art—assignment

Assignment 3

Prepare a storyboard for an abstract TV film commercial

MORGAN BROTHERS
BUILDERS

	1	2	3	4
WHAT TO DRAW	Make a stylized drawing of a blueprint of a house. This occupies about two-thirds of the panel, which also contains a stylized unit of a T-square and triangle. Background is dark.	Sign is exact size and shape of blueprint. Letter in the words "Morgan Brothers Builders" cleanly and legibly. Dark background.	Abstract shape is about the size of sign in panel 2. First render small house realistically in panel 4, then let its silhouette dictate this shape.	Render small house realistically. Continue dark background.
AUDIO:	IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO BUILD A HOME...	...INCLUDE MORGAN BROTHERS, THE EXPERIENCED BUILDERS, IN YOUR PLANS.	IF YOU DESIRE A SMALL STRUCTURE...	...YOUR DREAM COTTAGE COME TRUE...
VIDEO:	Open on blueprint of a house, triangle, and T-square.	T-square unit moves down over blueprint, wiping it off and wiping on the sign, "Morgan Brothers Builders."	T-square unit moves up and off screen, wiping on abstract shape.	Shape dissolves into picture of small cottage.

	5	6	7	8
WHAT TO DRAW	Mansion's abstract shape should match outline in panel 6. It is much larger than abstract of cottage.	Render large home realistically—it must match abstract shape. Continue dark background.	Repeat drawing from panel 1.	Repeat drawing from panel 2.
AUDIO:	...OR A LARGE STRUCTURE THAT EXEMPLIFIES...	...THE FINEST IN THE TRADITION OF GOOD LIVING...	...THEN YOUR PLANS ARE COMPLETE IF...	...YOU PLAN ON HAVING MORGAN BROTHERS BUILD YOUR HOME!
VIDEO:	Cottage dissolves into abstract shape. Animate shape into larger unit--abstract shape of mansion.	Abstract dissolves into mansion.	Mansion dissolves into abstract. Animate this into blueprint, T-square, etc., as in panel 1.	Repeat action in panel 2.

FAMOUS ARTISTS COURSE
Student work
Lesson 24
Television art

HOW TO PRACTICE AND PREPARE FOR THIS LESSON

In this lesson we show you how to create storyboards for television commercials. We also explain how to simplify, plan timing and action, select the right type of characters and relate them to each other and to the background. When we criticize your assignments, we will be chiefly interested in how well you have understood and applied these points to your work.

After you have carefully read this lesson through for an over-all understanding of it, follow these study and practice suggestions:

1. Make some rough talking storyboards of each of the three types -- live, animated and abstract. Remember that the storyboard must sell itself -- the whole idea must be clear and convincing to the advertiser the first time he sees it. Select a number of magazine ads and pick out the selling points from each one. Then design your storyboard to get these points across as effectively as you can. As you work, keep in mind the ideal number of panels to do the job (pages 16 through 19), proper contrast of values (page 30) and correct lettering and layout as shown on page 31. Use a regular TV storyboard pad or, if you wish, draw up your storyboard panels as described in the assignment section below.

2. Go through magazine ads and select characters that recur in a company's advertising -- for example, a character that might be used as a trademark. Then redesign this character, simplifying it for television, following the principles described on pages 34 through 37, 40 and 41.

3. Restudy pages 44 through 47 and make storyboard drawings in which you really feature your main characters and subordinate the less important ones.

4. Go back over pages 50 and 51 to be sure you make the most effective use of your storyboard backgrounds. Be sure they hold their place and don't interfere with the characters' action. Select some landscapes (either photos or drawings you have made) and simplify them so that they would be suitable as backgrounds for TV.

5. Study the commercials on your own TV. Notice in some of them that while an announcer is talking and selling, the picture may consist of a single, dull announcement giving the name and address or phone number of a store which stays on the screen as long as ten seconds. Listen to the announcer's message, select his main points, and design two or three cards that will break up this ten-second period into more interesting intervals. The design of such flip cards for use on local TV stations offers you one very good way to begin TV work. See page 30.

6. From your kitchen shelves, select boxes, jars or cans of various kinds of food. Simplify and redesign them so that they would create a clear, strong impact in a television commercial and still project an easily recognized image of the product. See page 31.

THE ASSIGNMENTS YOU ARE TO SEND IN FOR CRITICISM

For this lesson you are to do TWO of the following three TV storyboards, which are outlined on Plates 1 and 2. Select whichever two you wish.

ASSIGNMENT 1. An animated storyboard advertising "Giant Jelly Beans."

ASSIGNMENT 2. A live storyboard advertising "Soothing Cough Syrup."

ASSIGNMENT 3. An abstract storyboard advertising "Morgan Brothers, Builders."

The animated storyboard is to have six panels. The live storyboard and the abstract storyboard will each have eight panels.

The accompanying Plates 1 and 2 describe these assignments in detail. As you will see, the frame or top space in each panel contains a description of what you are to picture, while the bottom space contains the words spoken (audio) and the description of the action (video).

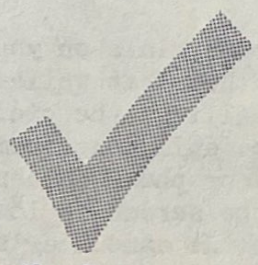
To do these assignments in a professional way, you should use prepared TV storyboard paper, which is described on page 11 of the lesson. However, if you wish, you may work on visualizing paper, simply ruling the panel divisions in line as on page 27. Do this in pencil -- don't draw a tonal border around the panels. Rule each complete storyboard panel 4 inches wide by 5½ inches deep. The picture portion

(over, please)

should measure 4 inches wide by 3 inches deep. If you do not have large enough sheets of paper, tape two 11 x 14-inch sheets together. For mailing, fold the storyboard or visualizing paper neatly along panel divisions so it will conveniently fit into the regular mailing carton.

For your assignment, do your two storyboards in pencil. Carefully plan and render the frames labeled "What to draw," and print or write legibly the audio and video information in the space below the drawings. Don't letter the instructions in the picture frames -- they are merely a more detailed description for your guidance and represent the ideas and planning that might have resulted from a preliminary discussion with the client or art director.

Be sure to read each storyboard through completely before you start drawing. For, as you will see, the way you design a panel is often governed by what follows in later panels.



Check
before mailing

IMPORTANT: Be sure to letter your name, address, and student number neatly at the lower left-hand corner of each assignment. In the lower right corner, place the lesson number and assignment number.

Your lesson carton should contain:

TWO assignments
1 Return shipping label filled out completely

Mail this carton to:
FAMOUS ARTISTS COURSE, WESTPORT, CONN.